THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

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A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

VOLUME 14 Summer · 1945 NUMBER 3

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— Emerson

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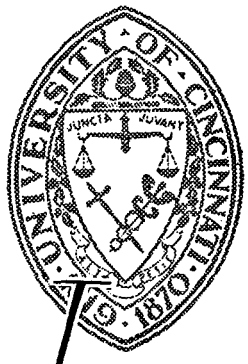

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 14 *Summer 1945* NUMBER 3

The Human Heart and the Human Will

THE WORLD of actuality has for the first time outstripped the imaginative world of the artist. Nothing — not even the phantasies of H. G. Wells's early scientific romances — has equalled what soldiers and reporters have seen in the starvation camps like Belsen and Buchenwald and the annihilation camps like Maidenek. Wells was obsessed with the destructiveness of science. He foresaw the chance that we would contrive weapons of war so deadly that, in the sequel, civilization would be destroyed, and only a few pitiable men would be left to grub amidst its ruins. But what the Germans did to Jews and political prisoners and prisoners of war had very little to do with Wells's phantasies of rocket warfare or chemical warfare.

It is not science that has destroyed the world, despite all the gloomy forebodings of the earlier prophets. It is man who has destroyed man. He has destroyed him face to face, with forethought and without pity. And he has not needed the newest weapons of science. He has used the oldest weapons of hunger and the bludgeon and fire.

This will be a blow to the artist and the social thinker. If the reality can outstrip both the individual and social imagination, then there is something wrong with the imagination. It must stretch out to new horizons and create new worlds.

The basic assumption of twentieth-century social theory has been that mankind is caught in a tragic paradox: that man's brain creates the things his will cannot control. This has been proved true by the event. But what we must now add to it is that man's

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will creates the things that paralyze his brain and brutalize his heart. And we must add that man's heart has proved to be a soil in which it is possible for evil to flower.

We are the fortunate survivors who are able to witness the crumbling of the fascist house of death. But we must not allow ourselves to forget that the men who built this house of death were also men. Their impulses were our impulses, their instinctive endowment ours, their biological inheritance ours, their historical memories ours. *De te fabula* must still be our cry to ourselves as we reflect on the meaning of the fascist story.

This has nothing to do with the guilt of the German nation: its guilt is beyond argument. But the German nation is part of the Western world, and the German people belong to the human race. That is the harsh fact we must face if we are to be honest with ourselves.

We have been too long concerned with only the human brain, and with the science and the social construction it has created. The axis of our interest will now have to shift to man himself and his essential nature. And it must shift to the way in which man can organize his collective will so as to create a genuine society of men and a genuine community of nations. Scholarship can have no other function in the generation to come. Poetry and the arts, when they have lifted themselves from the nightmare that will oppress them for some time to come, will turn the nightmare symbols into symbols of the human heart that has triumphed over its always potential evil.

Max Lerner

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The Artist, the Scientist, and the Peace

Sinclair Lewis

IT IS possible — it is at least possible — that no artist or scientist in history has ever been able to carry out half his plans to make mankind more cheerful and decent, and possible that this failure has been due less to the illness or laziness of the artist than to the fact that, since history began, all creative talents have been cramped by the insecurity of a world insane with war and tyranny. Yet it has been the artist-scientist himself who has least acknowledged this, who has most tried to hide himself from the age-long conflict for a more reasonable world.

But a strange thing about the present wartime is the number of artist-scientists who *have* realized that their work, no matter how detached from commerce or political ambition, is still dependent on the universal struggle for and against democracy; who have come out of the studio or the laboratory or the theater to stand with their fellow-workers; who are listening to the question: "*Which side are you on* — isolation or world control — *which side are you on?*" — and are now answering it.

The old-fashioned type of artist-scientist — the Pasteurs and Whistlers and Walter Paters — felt that their creative work was so superior that they could live in plush-lined clouds above the human struggle. Here and there a Voltaire or a Dickens or a physician like Vesalius knew that he could have no private light to work by if the whole world elsewhere was in darkness, and he

© Novelist and Nobel Prize winner, SINCLAIR LEWIS' most recent book was *Gideon Planish.*

This article was originally a speech given by Mr. Lewis for the Opera Victory Rally series, broadcast from the Metropolitan Opera House, December 16, 1944.

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cried "Let there be universal light!" even if, in so crying, he lost his respectable reputation or his very life. Then, during the last war, so timid and retired an etcher of society as Henry James saw that he and his work were meaningless unless he came out and rejoined the human race, and at last, rather timidly, took his stand against Germany.

All along, people like Bernard Shaw and Professor Einstein and Carl Sandburg have seen that their little desks were nothing unless they were joined to all the other little desks in the world, and that not least, but most of all men, the artist, the scientist must know and somewhat loudly state whether he is for tyranny and cruelty and machine discipline, or for the people, all the people.

In this war, among the German writers, the renowned Gerhardt Hauptmann, once the darling among all revered German novelists and dramatists, decided on which side *he* belonged. He belonged with safety and a handsome new farm and obsequiousness to all the goose-stepping lords of the revised Germany. So, even in wartime, he got these luxuries; he lost nothing but his self-respect, and the love of every decent man. That's excellent: he openly took his side — he didn't hide his shamefulness.

But certain Germans and Austrians, like Franz Werfel, Bruno Walter, Stephen Zweig, Sigmund Freud, Bela Schick, Thomas Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger decided that new houses and new coats and the hoarse cheering of schmaltz-headed drill-sergeants weren't enough to make up for the loss of honor, the loss of that quiet satisfaction with your work which is life itself; and they went into exile, gave up every neighbor, every title, even the sweet sound of their own accustomed language, that the world might know on which side they were.

But it's time to stop all that, isn't it? It's cosmic idiocy that an honest and competent man should have to lose even his own tongue and his beloved citizenship because he *is* too honest and too competent to stand for the botched tyrannies of gangster rulers. The world has always allowed that sort of thing, since long before the exile of Dante, and it is time, it always has been time, for a new kind of world organization which won't merely yearn for but actually produce security for the competent and honest,

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and not permit them again to be smashed by incessant and senseless wars. Public murder has become a little too costly; there are people who are really thinking about some sort of a law against it!

Everybody, whether lawyer or garage mechanic or farmer or housewife, suffers from the usurpation of wars, but the problem of the scientist or the artist (and consequently the problem of such citizens as want to enjoy the product of the artist and to benefit by the discoveries of the scientist) is twofold. Like everybody else, he must think about that interesting task, making a living — a diversion extremely cramped by war — but his supreme interest has little to do with a mere living.

The ordinary workman, whether he is a carpenter or a senator, works best when he scrupulously follows the best standards of the day. When a surgeon takes out an appendix, we don't think more highly of him if he tries the experiment of getting at the appendix through the right elbow. But the creator in the arts and the research man in the laboratory and the inventor in the workshop have a value exactly as their work is a little different from anything that has been done before. And they can never develop that differentness in a world of insecurity, where they know that anything they do, trivial or important, is judged not by its significance to mankind but by the way in which it tickles a gang of gorillas. Their native land is truth, but no artist or scientist in history has yet dwelt utterly and continuously in that land of truth, because it always has been stormed by the lovers of power.

But it is not important merely for the artists and the scientists themselves to see how their truth has been corrupted, to see where they stand; it is just as important for their admirers. When the Nazis burned the books in Berlin — or for that matter, when a certain handsome city in these United States flops back into medievalism and bans books that do not seem to do much injury to the other cities — then it is the would-be readers of the books that suffer more than the writers; and when the Nazis decide that the music of Mendelssohn is Jewish and not at all the sort of thing that Dr. Goebbels would care to write, then it is the lovers of symphonies and not the ghost of the great master that are

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robbed. If people really want great music, great poetry, great painting, if they really want medical discoveries which will save their babies from death, instead of wanting to live either in a Fascist slaughterhouse or a comic-strip world of triviality, then they must give the artists and the scientists a civilization in which they can show what they really can do — as none of them has ever yet had the chance to show.

It isn't that the artist needs softer beds or more food, and as for publicity, in these days of radio and tabloids he probably gets too much of it! It is a spiritual thing that he needs — an assurance that what he is doing is not futile, a sense that it profits him to produce what will demand of him the labor of years, a whole lifetime of the most honest devotion, rather than something quickly turned out to please the fickle vanity of Fascist playboys whose toys are not only the machine gun and the rope but pretty propaganda.

But the artist will never do his possibly magnificent best, if, after this war, there is going to be a patched-up world in which the prospects for an unending peace are just a *little* better than in the nineteen twenties — if there are to be merely a few more pleasant fictions called treaties and tea parties called conferences. I am not at all sure that the most mulish kind of complete isolationism is not preferable to playing at world-government, because it is at least honest: you know what and where it is.

In the matter of civilization for the artist or scientist, it has been all or nothing, and usually it has been nothing. However great his talent, if it begins to be corrupted by the cynicism that spreads in an insecure and dishonest world, then that one germ of despair will creep until it rots the whole, and the artist or scientist, along with all his followers, will have a shining brilliance, but it will be the autumnal color of decay.

Consider the science of genetics, the science of birth and the better production of children. So long as that science is devoted to producing more and stronger little Nazis, it is evil, and the more skillful it may become, the more evil it will be. That knowledge will not even begin to be valuable until it is devoted to producing not better little Germans — or better little Americans or

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Englishmen — but universally, everywhere in the world, regardless of uniforms, better human beings. The scientist, the artist, can ultimately contribute to making a world fit to live in, only *in* a world that is fit to live in — not a city or a state or a nation, but a *world* that is fit to live in. That fact he must know, and must proclaim.

Professor Albert Einstein has asked us to print the following correction of his article, "On the 'Cosmologic Problem,'" which appeared in the Spring issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR:

The Remark on page 149 concerning the case of vanishing density ($G = o$) is based on an error in calculation. In reality the space mentioned is Euclidean and hence no argument in favor of the closedness of space can be deduced from it. Otherwise this oversight does not influence the contents of the paper.

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Summer Night

Babette Deutsch

Although the darkness spoke with many mouths,
The country darkness, silence felt no wound.

The crickets in the grass, wind in the trees,
Earth breathing, surf of summer lives, the sound

Of a brook stuttering in the speech of leaves,
Brushed her with talk as with a blind caress

And so she stirred. The blacked-out hills that bore
Night's growing weight alone stood answerless.

So dim a fleece was hung across the door
Of this soft world, eyes could deny the blaze

Beyond, the huge bright flowers of agony
Bursting in Europe, the dazzling sprays

Of death fullblown over a withered sea.
This dark was sovereign. Doom was muted here.

Yet fire flew, the boughs were quick with it,
Sparks out of nowhere, springing up, to clear

The treetops, dews of flame now lost, now lit,
Pricking their still night-music as they shone.

Cool flakes of light, they burned and left no scars,
But dumbly glowed, more marvellous than the sun
Who never beacons to the other stars.

◎ BABETTE DEUTSCH's most recent book of poems is *Take Them, Stranger*. She has in preparation a book about Shakespeare for the common reader.

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Miss Webster and *The Tempest*

Oscar James Campbell

THE recent production of *The Tempest* at the Broadway Theatre in New York has induced a curious state of mind in the city's dramatic critics. Though admiring the courage and the resourcefulness of the producers, they are almost without exception disappointed in the play. Its "deficiencies" surprise them. Remembering it as a delicate tissue woven entirely of magic and romance, they are shocked to find so much time wasted by the low comedy fools. Trinculo and Stephano, they think, should be ditched. The physical farce developed by these clowns and the arbitrary twists of plot that make up the baser side of the work exhaust critical patience. In other words, our commentators wish that Shakespeare had written a play much more like *The Tempest* that is enshrined in their memory.

Unhappily the play which the New York critics remember with affection is not the one that came from Shakespeare's pen. Instead it is their version of a legendary work created by the romantic critics of the early nineteenth century and embellished by the intellectual heirs of those enthusiasts down to the present day. Hazlitt was one of the first to extol *The Tempest* as one of the most original and perfect of Shakespeare's works — full of grace and of grandeur. This praise was too measured for romantic searchers after the ineffable. They soon discovered beneath the glittering surface of the story an esoteric meaning of which the characters and the action were but symbols. They detected in *The Tempest*

© OSCAR JAMES CAMPBELL, professor of English at Columbia University, is the author of *Comicall Satyre and Shakespeare's* Troilus and Cressida and *Shakespeare's Satire*.

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Shakespeare's *adieus* to the great powers of his mind which he had decided no longer to use!

But to establish the play as a poet's last will and testament was not enough. It began to bring authentic tidings of invisible things. It was, if nothing else, a teasing allegory. James Russell Lowell committed himself to the idea that it was an example of how a great poet should write an allegory, for "*The Tempest* suggests an under meaning everywhere but forces it upon us nowhere. It tantalizes the mind with hints that imply so much and tell so little, yet keeps the attention all eye and ear, with eager, if fruitless, expectation."

I

Recent literary critics have revived and extended the notions of the romantics. They continue to hear the voice of Shakespeare in Prospero's glorious speech uttered just after the disappearance of the spirits who have enacted the masque of Ceres. "These our actors," he begins, "are melted into thin air," signalizing one of the minor triumphs of Time, the destroyer. "Like this little spectacle of my devising," he proceeds,

> the great globe itself
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like this insubstantial pageant, faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

A reader free from the notion that the best literature is always veiled autobiography recognizes in these lines the noblest of Shakespeare's many utterances on mutability. And he finds no difficulty in accepting the dramatic propriety of the speech at this precise moment of the action. Prospero knows that he is to give up his magic and that his loved Ariel too is soon to follow the spirits of the masque into nothingness. The moment is therefore full of solemn melancholy. And since, like most of Shakespeare's important characters, he is a poet in his own right, he gives his imagination free range until his speech rings with universal meaning.

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Since Miss Webster quite properly deleted the masque from her production, she had to find a new place for this famous example of Shakespeare's philosophical lyricism. She solved the problem boldly by transferring the speech to the very end of the play. As Prospero delivers it, the other characters silently disappear and the drama itself becomes an insubstantial pageant that fades back into the region whence it came — the subconscious mind of the dramatist. This speech in its new setting provides an effective and theatrical finale. It even hints that as the curtain falls Prospero perhaps is speaking in Shakespeare's name.

But the thoughtful spectator will avoid identifying the character with the dramatist. To do so is to run into absurdity. A poet who boasted that his works had

> bedimm'd
> The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds

or that

> graves at his command
> Have wak'd their sleepers, op'd and let 'em forth
> By his so potent art

— a poet claiming such awful powers for his art would seem to any audience — and especially to the courtly one for which the play was clearly devised — to have become mad with presumption and pride.

This popular autobiographical interpretation of Prospero, though untenable, at least has the virtue of preserving a sound estimate of his dramatic function. Not so much can be said for the vagaries of those critics who, like Professor Theodore Spencer, see Prospero as "shimmering with overtones and implications." *The Tempest*, he is certain, is a play "with so many layers of meaning that no single interpretation can do it justice." To begin with, we must, so he says, think of the drama in terms of the difference between appearance and reality. Mr. Spencer believes that most of Shakespeare's great plays deal with this difference. But in addition to that basic pattern, the play, in his opinion, dramatizes the three levels of Nature's hierarchy — the animal, the human, and the intellectual. Now given this hint, some historian of ideas was sure to point out that Ariel, Prospero and

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Caliban give us a significant view of the great chain of being — and, sure enough, Professor Tillyard brings forward just this notion in his *The Elizabethan World Picture*.

So far we have listed only the saner implications with which the play "shimmers." Those tinged with insanity are infinitely various. Ariel is said to be the symbol of Shakespeare's poetry, Caliban of his prose. Sycorax is the Dark Lady and Caliban the friend who stole her. Or the entire play is an allegorical picture of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, with Sycorax standing for Catherine de Medici, Caliban for Ravaillac, and Miranda for the Huguenot sect. Mark Van Doren remarks, "Any set of symbols, moved close to this play, lights up as in an electric field."

Perhaps that is precisely the trouble. The symbols become so bright that they dim out the drama. In ways like these, literary critics and amateur philosophers have complicated beyond all reason and all sense of the theatre what Shakespeare meant to be an easily comprehensible play. He surely wrote it primarily to entertain the modish audiences who gathered at the Blackfriars Theatre, which Shakespeare's company had acquired a few years before. The effect of the play depends upon spectacle rather than upon close-knit suspense or the development of character. And it offers in its two hours' theatrical traffic almost every form of varied dramatic entertainment from robust low comedy to fantasy and court masque. To gratify the taste for music common among the cultivated patrons of the Blackfriars Theatre Shakespeare adorned *The Tempest* with some of his best songs. "Where the bee sucks," is an allegro; "Full fathom five thy father lies," a solemn adagio; and "The Master, the swabber, the boatswain, and I," a spirited allegretto. And the atmosphere is haunted by solemn, strange, and marvelously sweet music.

II

The essential nature of *The Tempest* — and indeed that of almost all of its diverse features — stands revealed if it be considered as an exalted version of a variety of pastoral play that was very popular in Italy in the sixteenth century. Though full-

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length plays of the type are extant, the formula was in particular a favorite with designers of Commedie dell' Arte.

The scene of dramatic spectacles of this kind is invariably an island. It is called "Enchanted Arcadia," "Lost Island," or by various other names strongly suggestive of a faraway corner of fairyland. The notion of some such remote spot was probably derived by way of medieval romance from Avalon, the mythical "Isle of the Blessed" in Celtic legend. A benevolent or "white" magician rules each one of these enchanted islands, and the insignia of his office, as always, are a staff and a book. His art gives him power over familiar spirits, satyrs, and other malign and grotesque creatures, whom he confines in the cave that is always to be found in the center of the stage. Some of his magic is mere jugglery and hocus pocus designed to produce mystification. And it is always diluted with plenty of physical farce. But its real purpose is eventually to bring lovers to marriage and to allay old enmities.

The plot of which Prospero is the center is an exact replica of the plots of the popular Italian pastorals. In most of them the magician through his enchantment raises a storm that shipwrecks a vessel filled with old enemies of the magician. In some of the dramas, as for instance in *The Tempest*, we actually see the wretched creatures aboard the tossing ship "lamenting, wailing, and crying for help." Finally the ship sinks, taking all hands down. Then one by one the mariners proceed to put in an appearance, the clowns always arriving in some grotesque fashion calculated to please the inexacting. One buffoon is belched forth from the mouth of a whale. Terrified by their experiences, the zanies usually recognize each other only after a long routine of physical farce. One scenario instructs the clowns to meet each other with the stage business (lazzi) of "touching and fear." Another script instructs a buffoon to gesticulate over one of his fellows while declaring that he cannot decide whether he has found a man or a beast. After various adventures, often lewd, between the zanies and the bestial islanders, the two groups unite in a plot to steal the magician's book and, having in this way deprived him of his supernatural powers, to murder him. In one of the plays the

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conspirators actually steal the precious volume. But the magician always foresees and thwarts the plot, recovers his book, gets his enemies completely in his power, and then, reversing his spells, brings about a completely happy ending.

The Tempest belongs in all of its distinguishing features to this type of popular Italian pastoral. We can best understand Shakespeare's play if we realize that its basic structure is the same as that found in those naive spectacles. For this reason character delineation, sharply defined conflict, and ethical meaning are subordinated to immediate theatrical effect.

III

Prospero is Shakespeare's version of the Mago in the Italian plays — a benevolent old man practicing only white magic, by means of which he floods his island with enchantment. Much of his art is mere conjury, which palls upon a modern audience but which clearly delighted the Elizabethan spectators. We have scant interest in "the strange shapes that bring in the banquet and dance about it with gentle acts of salutation" and later dance it off "with mocks and mows." Prospero adopts the conventional methods of magic, both black and white, by raising storms with a vapor, but he gives his business a contemporary touch by sending Ariel to the "still-vext" Bermoothes for the dew with which he plans to brew his tempest. Bermuda had a bad reputation for storms in Shakespeare's day. Had not Sir George Somers been shipwrecked off that coast in the autumn of 1610 while on his way to Virginia? Prospero is up to date in believing that only dew gathered by midnight in that storm center of the far-off new world has the properties necessary to raise the kind of powerful and discriminating tempest his plans require. However, the fact that Prospero sent Ariel to Bermuda for his storm-brewing ichor is not proof that his enchanted island was anchored somewhere in the new world. It suggests rather that Ariel had to make a long flight through the air in order to reach the charmed spot in the Bermoothes. The passengers in the wrecked ship were clearly not the founders of liberty in America.

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When the spectators at *The Tempest* caught sight of Prospero as he issued from his cave, clad in his wizard's mantle and carrying a book and staff, they all knew the kind of character he was and just about what he was going to do. And he disappointed none of their expectations. His trappings, every triumph of his white magic, even his part in the plot, belonged to the conventions long attached to the central character in this popular type of Italian pastoral.

Each reader of the text and each spectator at a performance of the play should of course listen attentively to all the overtones in Prospero's lines that his ear can detect. He may, for example, give Prospero's career the meaning which Arnold Moss conveys in his acting of the role. For Mr. Moss believes that Prospero at first enjoys the supreme power which his magic has given him and exercises it ruthlessly and arrogantly. But when he sees his daughter approaching full maturity cut off from all other human beings but himself, he realizes that he has used his occult powers with utter selfishness. His relation to Miranda is depicted throughout the play as tender and fatherly. We see her through the eyes, not of a lover, but of a protective parent. She is Prospero's and not Ferdinand's Miranda. Solicitude for her future produces in Prospero a kind of conversion. He decides to use his magic no longer to satisfy his thirst for power, but as an agent of reconciliation and healing. His elaborate plot for restoring peace with his enemies has for its end the establishment of Miranda in a world of men and women where she may live and love as a happy woman should.

An imaginative alertness that brings this wider view of Prospero's role enhances the significance and beauty of the fable. But to see in his white magic the art with which Shakespeare fabricated thirty-seven plays, or to interpret all that Prospero does as an allegory of the poet's career, is to render earth-bound one of the most spectacular flights of the poet's imagination.

IV

Though Ariel, like the eye of the poet in fine frenzy rolling,
"Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,"

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he is not for this reason the symbol of Shakespeare's ranging imagination. Ariel is, first of all, a sprite released from a cloven pine, and must serve his liberator for a fixed term before he can gain his freedom. Why? Because that is what all such spirits have had to do in romance from the time of the thirteenth-century *chanson de geste* of Huon of Bordeaux. Ariel is also a fairy of the family of Puck, or more accurately, what Puck would have been had Shakespeare not given the first fairy of his invention some of the characteristics of Robin Goodfellow, the loutish rustic spirit whom a bowl of cream and mess of white bread could seduce into doing the housework. So Ariel is a diminutive spirit who lives under the blossom that hangs on the bow, as unsubstantial and iridescent as a hummingbird. As a fairy Ariel quite properly breaks into song at the slightest pretext and dances his way through the play. And never has Shakespeare so beautifully united music and magic as in him.

Zorina, the famous ballet dancer whom Miss Webster cast for the part in her production, could obviously give only a small part of the illusion which Shakespeare intended. Her dances and attitudinizing had the necessary grace, except perhaps for the high hurdle which she took on many of her exits. But it is a major misfortune that she could not sing or even in the lines she spoke convey the sense of enchantment which lies latent in the text. Perhaps a talented choirboy, if he could have been found, would have better created the illusion of this rational diminutive demon through whom Prospero, like all magicians, was forced to act.

V

Caliban is Shakespeare's equivalent of the satyrs and other hybrid minions of the magician who disport themselves lasciviously and ridiculously in the pastoral plays which served as Shakespeare's source. He is also a late representative of a goblin undergoing punishment through services which he must render to the King of Fairyland. The son of a witch and the Devil, he is a hybrid like the satyrs, only more human. Though less than a man, he is never a mere brute wallowing in filth. Some of the characters in the play call him a mooncalf, a name often used to describe a

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congenital idiot. But Shakespeare visualizes him as a monster who had long lived in popular superstition, a creature half fish and half man. Miss Webster is then close to Shakespeare's conception when she arrays her Caliban in a covering of scales. But the poet gives individuality to his debased fish-man by endowing him with the qualities of a surly half-witted boy, of a savage and, shall we say, of an ill-trained dog. Over this strange amalgam play Shakespeare's imagination, humor, and poetry to endow with life one of the most original and robust of his creations. This was the part played in Miss Webster's production by Canada Lee.

It is possible that Shakespeare's imagination was aided in its fashioning of Caliban by observing some of the American Indians whom navigators brought back to England from the New World during the four or five years preceding the production of *The Tempest*. In 1608, for example, Captain Harlow returned from Cape Cod with a number of Indians, one of whom, the giant chieftain Epinew, was exhibited in a London sideshow. And he was only one of numerous redskins treated thus. Two of the five whom George Weymouth brought home from Maine in 1605 did not leave England until 1609, when they accompanied Sir George Somers on his famous voyage to Virginia. They must have been in London for about five years. But that Shakespeare surely gazed upon some of these savages is no proof that he intended Caliban to represent the popular conception of an American aborigine. Caliban is an Old World dramatic type given a new vitality by his author and accepted by the spectators with a fresh curiosity because of their memory of American savages seen on exhibition in London. It is because so many curious traditions have gone to the making of Caliban that he is, as Stoll says, "so full-bodied and so full-blooded." The satyr of the Italian pastoral has been transformed into a highly individualized beast-man playing a vigorous part in the conventional situations of the typical popular pastoral plays.

It is just possible that Shakespeare expected his intelligent auditors to catch some suggestions of social significance in Caliban's conduct. This brutish man becomes an inept revolutionary. He is a ridiculously bad judge of men. The drunken but-

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ler and steward he mistakes for gods, and their intoxicants for "celestial liquor." His jaw drops in wonder and awe at beholding them. To them he will pay abject allegiance, performing willingly for them his hated task of fetching wood and as a special treat offering with childish eagerness to show Stephano a jay's nest. All this he will do if they will only free him from the tyrant he now serves. Assured of this, he marches off in tipsy revolutionary ardor. Now that he has a new master, he will become a new man — never realizing that for him, as for all the mass of men, a change of masters can never be anything but a change of despots.

VI

Much has been made of the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness which floods the final scene of the play. This, say the biographical critics, must surely reflect the serenity which settled down upon Shakespeare's spirit during the last years of his career. At the advanced age of forty-eight, he realized that all the storms of his life had passed. He had come into a tranquil harbor where he could spend the few years left to him in a state of lavish good will, where every third thought should be his grave.

But there is no need arbitrarily to see in Prospero's speeches Shakespeare's longing for silvan tranquillity. The playwright had two dramatic reasons for composing a happy ending to *The Tempest*. In the first place the Italian pastorals which served as Shakespeare's model always had an ending of this sort. It was the inevitable close of the career of any benevolent white magician. In one of the scenarios two old men discover their lost sons; with great jubilation "all praise the Magician and thank him for his kindness and for saving them from so many dangers." He then announces that he does not care to practice his art any longer, but that he will return to the world of men. In a similar fashion do all these popular pastorals end.

Another reason for giving *The Tempest* a happy denouement is to be found in the taste of the audiences of the Blackfriars Theatre. They demanded to be sent home in a comfortable state of mind.

Miss Webster evidently sees in *The Tempest* the same features

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that appealed to Shakespeare when he became acquainted with the Italian pastorals. She does not view the drama as the author's farewell to the stage, nor does she think it is a piece of philosophical speculation lyrically magnificent but dramatically flimsy. To her it is not even a pseudo-scientific fantasy. It is quite simply a play which offered entertainment of all the sorts most pleasing to the rather inattentive aristocratic audiences who came to the new Blackfriars Theatre. A sense of wonder was more to their taste than strong dramatic feeling, pale romance than deep passion, wild physical farce than penetrating comedy of character. Above all they rejected any sort of painful catastrophe in favor of a lavishly happy ending. All of these traits are to be found in the Italian plays that depicted the life of enchanted islands situated somewhere in perilous and forlorn seas. Shakespeare's imagination and poetry lifted this strange world into high realms of beauty, which Miss Webster and her talented actors have made immediate experience for all who saw her recent production. And this is a far better play than the mixture of vague philosophical suggestion and furtive autobiographical revelation, that the sentimental and pseudo-Hegelian critics have foisted upon William Shakespeare.

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Warning the Trees

Marie Gilchrist

Another spring will visit the trees of this acre,
The buds will break as always, the leaves will come
Once more . . . and only once. And I wish I could tell them
While the ground is frozen over, the boughs still numb.
But the sinister word that a new paved street is building,
That the axe will be laid to their roots, that they will be torn
Abruptly from the earth, has no meaning for them,
They are more concerned about the buds to be born;
Busy with the immediate need of blossoms,
Absorbed in a plan for the usual yield of fruit.
I doubt if they will even neglect to fashion
The buds for next year, perfect and minute.

What if they understood? What if they answered:
"If this is the last time we shall come to bloom,
The last time fruit shall form and fall from our branches,
The last spring we shall awake in the earth's kind room:
Let us bear flowers that sum up a century's fragrance
Drawing the bees in swarms to our honeyed boughs,
Let every calyx be dusted golden with pollen,
Thronged day-long with bees in sunny carouse.
There will not be another spring like this one,
Another summer so fecund, so alive,
While the stretched skins shine, the crowded boughs stoop lower,
And we, forewarned, luxuriantly thrive;
Hoping that the harvest will burden to breaking
The boughs that could have fruited many years more,
Pouring a life-time's sap in a season's rapture,
Trusting the new seeds folded close in the core. . . ."

If this were so . . . I would tell the trees in time
To plan on being cut down in their prime.

© Formerly a member of the editorial staff of *The Reader's Digest*, MARIE GILCHRIST is the author of several books, including *Writing Poetry*, and *Wide Pastures*, a collection of poems.

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Communism in New York 1848-1879

Worth Tuttle Hedden

Our warfare is an assertion of human rights; first, the right of man to be governed by God and to live in the social state of heaven; second, the right of woman to dispose of her sexual nature by attraction instead of by law and routine, and to bear children only when she chooses; third, the right of all to diminish labor and increase the advantages of life by association.

ON THESE tenets John Humphrey Noyes established the Oneida Community, a venture in pre-Marxian communism, in the exact geographical center of the Empire State on February 1, 1848. Agitation begun by the Presbyterian Synod of Central New York in 1873 resulted, six years later, in the abandonment of Complex Marriage, in the acceptance of the government of the United States in lieu of God's, and, on January 1, 1881, in the conversion of Biblical Communism to a joint stock company, Oneida Community, Ltd., with a capital of $517,179.00.

G. B. Shaw paid tribute to J. H. Noyes in "The Revolutionist's Handbook" and H. G. Wells, in the early days of the century, was a guest at the community's old Mansion House. Twenty years ago representatives of the Soviet Union, here to study industrial management, returned to Russia with a plan of the present setup at Sherrill, the company city near Oneida, and the avowed intention of copying some of its features. In 1937 a printing house in Geneva, New York, in order to acquaint local residents with this far-famed industry, published an illustrated pamphlet, soft-

© WORTH TUTTLE HEDDEN is the author of a recent novel, *Wives of High Pasture*, based on the Oneida Community. Mrs. Hedden has contributed essays to *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harpers Magazine*, and *Forum*.

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pedaling the history and playing *fortissimo* the modern plant and efficient economy of Oneida, Ltd., manufacturers of Community Plate, a silverware guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Ninety-seven years ago John Humphrey Noyes thought he was founding the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, guaranteed to last for eternity. He was the unique product of his times, and the Oneida Community the personal expression of his dynamic philosophy. Born in Brattleboro, Vermont, in 1811 of an intelligent, deeply religious mother and an erudite, successful father, he came to maturity when most citizens of the United States were absorbed in the conflicting enterprises of making money and getting to heaven. The way to wealth in American capitalistic infancy being straight and broad and that to heaven narrow, denominationally devious and overmarked, people argued the fine points of theology as today they argue economic theory. A few, interested in becoming neither capitalists nor angels, adopted the socialistic doctrine of Charles Fourier, popularized in Albert Brisbane's *Tribune* column, and went to live a communal life on a communal farm. A few others, intent only on winning wings, followed such religious leaders as Father Rapp or Mother Ann Lee on what they believed the only road to ethereal commissions. Young Noyes, by means of his Perfectionist interpretation of scripture, got the camel through the needle's eye. His disciples lived in an endowed heaven for thirty-one years and their descendants still control the stock of the Community's most profitable product.

After winning his degree and a Phi Beta Kappa key at Dartmouth, John Noyes, in 1832, was the leader of the most earnest students at Yale Theological Seminary. When he announced his literal belief in a statement by Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor that "men can and must live to the full extent of their moral ability" he had an interested audience. When, a bit later, he added to that announcement the antinomian which John Wesley had advanced and retracted that "once freed from sin a man can sin no more," he had a startled audience. His sermon from the text, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and his declaration that having accepted Christ, *he himself* could sin no more, emptied the hall and branded him a heretic. Perfectionism, a shelterless offshoot of

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Congregationalism, was permissible. Many estimable people adhered to it, but young Noyes carried it too far. He said, "When one has really accepted Christ, it is Christ who acts, not the mortal alone, and so sin is impossible." One did not have to wait for death to open the gates of Heaven. The Kingdom could be set up in the United States of America now because Christ had already come again, in 70 A.D. at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

The Kingdom's foundations in a Perfectionist Bible class which Noyes organized in 1836 in Putney, Vermont, were simple and sturdy. Shy, repressed, highly-sexed, stubborn, fanatical, genial, humorous, magnetic, he drew men to him as effortlessly as he drew women — the best of New England blood in sets of families, young men and women who paired in lawful wedlock as he dictated. In ten years his Bible class had become a community of twenty-eight adults, nine children, two dwelling houses (one the Noyes's homestead), a chapel, a store, and a printing press from which issued the publications that would convert the rest of the world to Biblical Communism. Here was a prophet who was a prophet in his home town, with some neighbors, two sisters, one brother, and, eventually, his mother, accepting him as God's appointed representative. Heaven was in Putney — for those who were in Heaven. For those townspeople whose post office address was simply Putney, Vermont, it was something else again. Once the rumor, then the proof, was abroad that Noyes and his people were living as though "each was married to all," hell broke loose. Noyes and two of his closest disciples fled separately in the night to avoid a riot, and the remainder of the community followed in a more leisurely fashion.

The refugees, less "a few burdensome souls," rejoined their leader in the haven he found among other Perfectionists at Oneida, and there, on February 1, 1848, formally founded the Oneida Community, a Heavenly Association. Each individual or family gave to the common hoard what money or useful material possessions it had, receiving in return all living expenses, clothing, education, time to pursue special interests or hobbies, and, as Community income increased, freedom from menial tasks. It was not easy to enter this Heaven. No new converts were accepted

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who had not, after a long correspondence and a period of probation, "exhibited a renewed mind, shown a reborn and a loving heart and an unquenchable desire for unimpeded growth." The elemental Government, Complex Marriage, and the Labor Policy on which the communists thrived evolved from Noyes's ebullient libido. Justified by his "intuitive Bible reading," they became law.

Believing that "liberty never metamorphoses the children of God into swine," he set the goal of "Unity, Organization, and Self-improvement" against individualism, chaos, and licentiousness; and he preached a consistent subordination of the "I" in the "We." He prohibited tobacco, liquor, tea, coffee, and novel-reading and adopted a plan of Mutual Criticism, by which the Community governed itself, every member at one time or another sitting in a silent perspiration while a selected group or the whole membership "freely and frankly" discussed his character and conduct. These symposia acted salubriously on both critic and subject. For the former they provided emotional relief, swept little irritations out of mind, and made him more subtle in estimating his fellows. In the latter they brought on such a sweat that eventually a Criticism was prescribed as a cure for physical as well as spiritual ills. Miss E, too inclined to live on "laughing and frolic," was advised "to be gay without being rude, respectful without being dull." Mr. J, "who carried masculinity to excess," was urged "to cultivate more of the woman in his nature." Miss M needed to become less disputatious, while her critics were advised to study "her ability to speak naturally on the most delicate subject." Mr. C asked for a Criticism when he felt he was "falling into a selfish love" and was persuaded by the circle to "sacrifice to the interests of the Community a mutual attachment that threatened to become too exclusive and dangerous."

Mr. Noyes had worked out the theory of Complex Marriage as early as 1837 when the girl he loved, shocked by his heresy, had married a more conventional citizen. In 1838 in proposing marriage to Harriet Holton, a zealous woman whose faith and substance so materially helped the Cause, he had written:

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We will enter into no engagement with each other which shall limit the range of our affections as they are limited in matrimonial engagements by the fashion of the world. I desire and expect my yoke-fellow will love all who love God, whether man or woman . . . and as freely as if she stood in no particular connection with me. The Object of my connection with her will not be to monopolize and enslave her heart or my own, but will enlarge and establish both in the free fellowship of God's universal family. If the external union and companionship of a man and a woman in accordance with these principles is properly called marriage, I know that marriage exists in heaven, and I have no scruple in offering you my heart and hand with an engagement to be married in due form as soon as God does us permit.

Harriet, likening him to the morning star, had agreed to all he proposed. Despite his "fiery nature," with her he had his first sexual experience, and with her he lived in strict monogamy for nearly ten years. Then, while he watched the sunset one afternoon with Mary Cragin, a young and beautiful disciple, God told him the time had come to put his marital theories into practice. "When the Will of God is on earth, there will be no marriage. I call a certain woman my wife — she is yours, she is Christ's, and in Him she is the bride of all saints." A man's ability to leave a woman as free as he himself wants to be, a woman's ability to share her husband, he said, was the crucial test of one's love for his fellowman; without that love one was unfitted for communal living. "No matter what his other qualifications may be, if a man cannot love a woman and be happy in seeing her loved by others, he is a selfish man, and his place is with the potherds of the earth." Dutifully Harriet took George Cragin as her Spiritual husband and soon after the other members of the little Putney community were sharing spouses. The foundations of communism, with no enduring loyalties interposed between the individual and the leader, were secure.

Even as the loss of his first love had prescribed, however subconsciously, the open door in marriage, the decade of monogamy and four stillborn babies motivated the distinction he made between Amative and Propagative Love. By 1848 he had made that intellectual differentiation physically possible. He "invented" a system of birth control he labelled Male Continence — the blessings of which, one young member wrote from Yale, "surpassed

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those of the steam engine and the electric telegraph." Mr. Noyes appealed "to the memory of every man who has had good sexual experience to say whether . . . the sweetest and noblest period of intercourse . . . is not that first moment of simple pressure and spiritual effusion." Judging from the Second Annual Report published in 1850, every man agreed with him: "The condition of the Association is a matter-of-fact witness of the feasibility of our special theory. Amativeness, the lion of the tribe of human passions, is conquered and civilized among us. . . . The fact that but one child has been born at Oneida that was begotten in the Association and that not undesignedly, testifies loudly for the reality of the victory we have obtained in separating the Social from the Propagative in the sexual relation. That . . . and our good health are . . . unanswerable contradictions of the hue and cry . . . against our licentiousness." The Annual Report for 1852 announced that "the increase of population by birth in the forty families for the past four years has been considerably less than the progeny of Queen Victoria alone."

Though Noyes is credited with coining the term "Free Love," love was not free for those men and women enisled in that small Heaven. Because youth was too prone to form "romantic, exclusive attachments" disastrous to true communism, young women, for Amative as well as Propagative relationships, were mated with the older men, young men with mature women. A woman, however, was free to refuse to respond to a "Message" from an admirer — always given by a third person to prevent preliminary love-making — if she were not attracted to him. Though she had to have permission to bear a child, she was free of its care after weaning, and sure of its well-being in the Children's House, of its education, and of its future financial security.

Until 1860 the birth rate was held firmly in check. Then Mr. Noyes, feeling that he had proven the practicability of his sexual theories, announced that he had God's sanction for "a planned, scientific procreation" which he termed Stirpiculture. Immediately fifty-three young women offered themselves "to be used in forming any combination that may seem to you desirable." As in everything else, the wishes of the individual in the matter of off-

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spring had to be subordinated to the good of the whole. First Mr. Noyes, then a Stirpiculture Committee, finally the Central Committee, passed upon applications to produce children. Some were denied, some granted, some permitted in a combination other than the first choice. Before consent was given or refusal made, genealogies were studied and medical histories compiled. Though the holiest members, free from physical defects, were in the preferred class because they were most likely to breed little Perfectionists, intellect was given its due. The general plan was a judicious in-inbreeding with an occasional mingling of "foreign" blood. Of the forty-three children born in the last few years of the Community's existence, twenty-two were exceptional physically and mentally, but only one became a Perfectionist — a son of an uncle and niece of Noyes blood. In 1921 fifty-two of the fifty-eight Stirpiculture babies were still living, the oldest fifty-two, the youngest forty-two.

"Money-making is the soul of the world; therefore in order to subdue the world to Christ," Mr. Noyes said, "we must carry religion into money-making." And, of course he did, initiating, while he built up the Community fortune, the practice of fair dealing with employees and competitors for which the present company is still known. In 1863, in addition to the steel traps on which early prosperity was based, the Biblical Communists were manufacturing paper boxes, sewing silks, travelling bags; canning vegetables and fruit; and employing outside labor on an ever-increasing scale. The Community brought such affluence to the countryside, and its relations with the world immediately surrounding it were so cordial, that orthodox Sunday Schools came to the Mansion House park for outings and picnics.

The duties of administration, directed by a Central Committee composed of Noyes and the older men, were handled by forty-eight departments, and there were committees for everything from Landscape to Watches. A young man applied to the proper committee for a new suit of clothes or a college education; a young woman for a brooch (the only ornament permitted) or a music course in New York City. In assigning work, taste as well as ability was taken into account, the aim being to make everyone

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contented. The Business Board, comprising the heads of all departments, met every Sunday morning, and all Community members were welcome. Every Sunday evening the secretary read his report to the General Meeting for discussion and approval. (Because in Heaven every day was the Lord's, brief religious services were held daily and there was no special observance of Sunday.)

Pressure from churchmen without brought about the dissolution of the Community sooner than any internal dissension could have done it, but the feel of autumn was in the air some time before Father Noyes's second flight from Heaven, in June, 1879, to avert an attack from the World. He who had "mightily shepherded" his flock was old and deaf, ready to pass his crook to the next generation — and the next generation did not want to accept it. Science was usurping the place of religion as a guiding force among these well-educated, thinking young men and women of the Community. "Success and leisure gave time for expressions of dissatisfactions. The old solidarity was gone and each desired a mate." Youth had to revolt, and being in a topsy-turvy position, unable to fight for the freedom it had, there was nothing for it to do but fight for the bonds of convention.

From his refuge in the bleak home of a devout Perfectionist family in western Ontario, Noyes sent back his plan of dissolution, which included the appointment of twenty men and women to guide the Community into acceptable social channels. Still possessed of the spirit and the dream, he established contact with disciples in the Middle West and went to Chicago in the hope of gathering them into a new community which the few Oneida faithful could join. But finding only passive sympathy there, he accepted a pension granted him by the new organization at Oneida and with the ever-loyal Harriet and a group of his earliest converts, retired to Niagara Falls where Oneida Community, Ltd. had leased a factory for the manufacture of tableware. He died there on April 13, 1886.

When shares in Oneida Community, Ltd. were distributed among the former communists, each received one share of stock ($100) for each year of service, and additional shares equal to

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one-half of his original contribution to the "community chest." "In the years immediately following the dissolution," Miss Esther Lowenthal wrote in The Journal of Political Economy for February 1, 1927, "many families sold their stock and moved away. Had any group been able to buy up a majority interest, it is possible that an ordinary commercial company might have developed. But the group of young people . . . who had been brought up in the Children's House . . . came to have an active part in the business about 1895 when, under the leadership of Mr. Pierrepont Noyes, son of the founder and himself president of the company, a new development of the institution began. Mr. Noyes resolved to preserve the group and to transmute its broken ideal of complete equality to a less strained and difficult way of life but one which should, nevertheless, preserve a substantial amount of the old spirit." By limiting the holdings of each family to 3 per cent of stock and the salaries of the executives to modest sums, great inequality of income was prevented and something of the Old Man's convictions retained — that "the prosperity of each is insured in the progress of the whole" and "every man is entitled to a great deal more than the product of his labor."

"Forty years ago, when I took charge here," Mr. Pierrepont Noyes said in 1937, "our system was radically different from ninety-nine hundredths of business concerns. We are by no means as outstanding now as we were in our earlier days. We do, I think, have a little different relation between all of our staff, both executive and laboring, but it would be hard to define."

An organizer for silver workers, explaining to his headquarters his inability to unionize the Sherrill plant, defined it this way:

> They work their men short hours, give them good pay, and treat them like human beings. Consequently there is the best of good will between employer and the employees. The employees seem to be perfectly satisfied with things as they are in the factory. Therefore I do not believe any successful organization could be formed among them. This company is different from any company you ever heard of in their treatment of their employees . . . not for advertising purposes but simply as a business policy carried out by men who put the man and woman ahead of the dollar.

There seems to be more than capitalistic paternalism in the

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company's contribution, equal to the amount of town taxes, for the support of an excellent high school and library; its generous aid in the purchase of employee homes; and its sharing of half its profits in a "contingent wage." The old Community spirit is discernible in the distribution of the Service Wage — an increase in wages in proportion to the length of service, and in the policy of never putting "an outsider at the top." In the long list of employee committees, from Game Propagation to Camera, in the Community Associated Clubs, one sees an application of the founder's dictum: "the more offices, the more contented people."

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Eternity and Time

Aldous Huxley

THE universe is an everlasting succession of events; but its Ground, according to that Philosophia Perennis which constitutes the highest common factor of the higher religions, is the timeless Now of the divine Spirit. A classical statement of the relations subsisting between time and eternity may be found in the later chapters of the *Consolation of Philosophy*, where Boethius summarizes the doctrines of his predecessors, notably of Plotinus.

"It is one thing," he writes, "to be carried through an endless life, another thing to embrace the whole presence of an endless life together, which is manifestly proper to the divine Mind. The temporal world seems to emulate in part that which it cannot fully obtain or express, tying itself to whatever presence there is in this exiguous and fleeting moment — a presence which, since it carries a certain image of that abiding Presence, gives to whatever may partake of it the quality of seeming to have being. But because it could not stay, it undertook an infinite journey of time; and so it came to pass that, by going, it continued that life, whose plenitude it could not comprehend by staying."

And again: "Since God hath always an eternal and present state, his knowledge, surpassing time's motions, remains in the simplicity of his presence and, comprehending the infinite of what is past and to come, considereth all things as though they were in the act of being accomplished." But knowledge of what is happening now does not determine the event. What is ordinarily called God's foreknowledge is in reality a timeless now-knowledge, which is compatible with the freedom of the human creature's will in time.

© *Time Must Have a Stop* is the most recent book written by ALDOUS HUXLEY, essayist and novelist.

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From Hobbes onwards, the enemies of the Perennial Philosophy have denied the existence and the very possibility of a *nunc stans* or eternal Now. According to these thinkers, time is fundamental; there is no other order of reality. Future events are completely indeterminate, and even God can have no knowledge of them. Consequently God cannot be described as Alpha and Omega — merely as Alpha and Lambda, or whatever other intermediate letter of the temporal alphabet is now in process of being spelled out. But the anecdotal evidence collected by the Society for Psychical Research and the statistical evidence accumulated during thousands of laboratory tests for extra-sensory perception point inescapably to the conclusion that even human beings are sometimes capable of foreknowledge. And if a finite consciousness can know what card is going to be turned up three seconds from now, or what shipwreck is going to take place next week, then there is nothing intrinsically absurd in the idea of an infinite consciousness that can know now events indefinitely remote in what, for us, is future time. The specious present which human beings call "now" may, and perhaps always does, contain a portion of the immediate and even of the relatively distant future. For the Godhead, the specious present would be that *interminabilis vitae tota simul et perpetua possessio*, of which Boethius speaks.

The existence of the eternal Now is sometimes denied on the ground that a temporal order cannot co-exist with another order which is non-temporal, and that it is impossible for a changing substance to be united with a substance that is changeless. This objection, it is obvious, would be valid if the non-temporal order were of a mechanical nature, or if the changeless substance were possessed of spatial and material qualities. But, according to the Perennial Philosophy, the eternal Ground is a spirit; the being of Brahman is *chit*, or consciousness. That a temporal world should be known and, in being known, sustained and perpetually created by a timeless consciousness is an idea which contains nothing self-contradictory.

Finally we come to the arguments directed against those who have asserted that the timeless Ground can be immediately ap-

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prehended by human minds. This claim is regarded as absurd, because it involves the assertion, "At one time I am eternal, at another time I am in time." But this statement is absurd only if man is a twofold being capable of living on only one level.

But if, as the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy have always insisted, man is not only a body and a psyche, but also a spirit, and if he can at will live either on the merely human plane or else in union with the divine Ground of his being, then the statement makes perfectly good sense. The body is always in time, the spirit is always timeless, and the psyche is an amphibious creature compelled by the laws of man's being to associate itself to some extent with its body, but capable, if it so desires, of experiencing and being identified with its spirit and, through its spirit, with the divine Ground. The spirit remains always what it eternally is; but man is so constituted that his psyche cannot always remain identified with the spirit. In the statement, "At one time I am eternal, at another time I am in time," the word "I" stands for the psyche, which passes from time to eternity when it is identified with the spirit and passes again from eternity into time, either voluntarily or by necessity, when it chooses or is compelled to identify itself with the body.

Spiritual progress is a spiral advance. We start, as infants, in the animal eternity of life in the moment, without anxiety about the future or regret for the past. We grow up into the specifically human condition of those who look before and after; who live, to a great extent, not in the present, but in memory and imagination; not spontaneously, but by rule and with prudence, in repentance and fear and hope. And we can continue, if we so desire, up and on in a returning sweep towards a point corresponding to our starting-place in animality, but incommensurably above it. Once more life is lived in the moment — the life, now, not of a subhuman creature, but a being in whom charity has cast out fear, vision has taken the place of hope, selflessness has put a stop to the positive egotism of complacent reminiscence and the negative egotism of remorse.

"The Sufi," says Jalal-uddin Rumi, "is the son of time present." Inevitably, for the present moment is the only aperture

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through which the soul can pass out of time into eternity, through which grace and inspiration can pass out of eternity into the soul, and through which charity can pass from one soul in time to another soul in time. That is why the Sufi and, along with the Sufi, every other practicing exponent of the Perennial Philosophy is, or tries to be, a son of time present. To quote Rumi once again,

> Past and future veil God from our sight;
> Burn up both of them with fire. How long
> Wilt thou be partitioned by these segments, like a reed?
> So long as a reed is partitioned, it is not privy to secrets,
> Nor is it vocal in response to lip and breathing.

And in systematic prose St. John of the Cross says the same thing: "This emptying of the memory, though the advantages of it are not so great as those of the state of union, yet merely because it delivers souls from much sorrow, grief and sadness, besides imperfections and sins, is really a great good."

In the idealist cosmology of Mahayana Buddhism memory plays the part of a rather maleficent demiurge. "When the triple world is surveyed by the Bodhisattva," we read in the *Lankavatara Sutra*, "he perceives that its existence is due to memory that has accumulated since the beginningless past, wrongly interpreted." The word here translated as "memory" means literally "perfuming." The mind-body carries with it the ineradicable smell of all that, throughout its personal and racial past, has been thought and done and felt and desired. The Chinese translate the Sanskrit by two characters, signifying "habit-energy." The world is what (in our eyes) it is, because of all the consciously or unconsciously and physiologically remembered habits formed by our ancestors or by ourselves, either in our present life or in previous existences. These remembered bad habits cause us to believe that multiplicity in time is the sole reality, and that the idea of "I," "me," "mine" represents an ultimate truth.

Nirvana consists in "seeing into the abode of reality as it is," and not reality *quoad nos*, as it seems to us. Obviously this cannot be achieved so long as there is an "us," to which reality can be relative. Hence the need, stressed by the Mahayanists, as by all other exponents of the Perennial Philosophy, to "die to self." And this

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dying must be a mortification not only of the appetites, the feelings and the will, but also of consciousness itself and of that which makes our consciousness the thing it is — our personal memory and our inherited habit-energies. To achieve complete deliverance, conversion from sin is not enough; there must also be a conversion of the mind, a *paravritti*, as the Mahayanists call it, or revulsion in the very depths of consciousness. As a result of this revulsion, the habit-energies of accumulated memory are destroyed and, along with them, the sense of being a separate ego. Reality is no longer perceived *quoad nos* (for the good reason that there is no longer a *nos* to perceive it), but as it is in itself. In Blake's words, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would be seen as it is, infinite." By those who are pure in heart and poor in spirit, *samsara* and *nirvana*, appearance and reality, time and eternity are experienced as one and the same.

Whenever God is thought of as being wholly in time, there is a tendency to regard Him as a "numinous" rather than as a moral being, a God of mere unmitigated power rather than a God of power, wisdom and love, an inscrutable and dangerous potentate to be propitiated by sacrifices and not a Spirit to be worshipped in spirit. All this is very natural; for time is a perpetual perishing and a God who is wholly in time is a God who destroys as fast as He creates. Nature is as incomprehensibly appalling as it is lovely and bountiful. If the Divine does not transcend the temporal order in which it is immanent, and if the human spirit does not transcend its time-bound soul, then there is no possibility of "justifying the ways of God to man." God as manifested in the universe is the irresistible being who speaks to Job out of the whirlwind, and whose emblems are Behemoth and Leviathan, the war-horse and the eagle.

It is this same being who is described in the apocalyptic eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. "Oh, Supreme Spirit," says Arjuna, addressing himself to the Krishna whom he now knows to be the incarnation of the Godhead, "I long to see your Isvara-form" — that is to say, his form as God of the world, Nature, the temporal order. Krishna answers: "You shall behold the whole universe, with all things animate and inanimate, within this

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body of mine." Arjuna's reaction to the revelation is one of amazement and terror. This terror increases as he gradually comes to realize that the God of the universe is a God of destruction as well as creation.

> Swift as many rivers streaming to the ocean,
> Rush the heroes to your fiery gullets,
> Moth-like to meet the flame of their destruction.
> Headlong these plunge into you and perish. . . .
>
> Tell me who you are and were from the beginning.

Krishna's answer is clear and unequivocal:

> I am come as Time, the waster of the peoples,
> Ready for the hour that ripens to their ruin.

But the God who comes so terribly as Time also exists timelessly as Brahman, the eternal Godhead; and within and beyond man's time-tortured soul is his spirit, "uncreated and uncreatable," as Eckhart says — the Atman which is akin to or even identical with Brahman. Like the other formulations of the Perennial Philosophy, the Gita justifies God's ways to man by affirming — and the affirmation is based upon observation and experiment — that man can, if he so desires, die to his separate selfness and so come to union with the timeless Spirit. It affirms too that the Avatar becomes incarnate in order to assist human beings to achieve this union. This he does in three ways: by teaching the true doctrine in a world blinded by voluntary ignorance; by inviting souls to what St. Bernard calls "the carnal love" of his humanity, not indeed as an end in itself, but as means to the spiritual love-knowledge of Spirit; and finally by serving as a channel of grace.

God who is Spirit can only be worshipped in spirit and for his own sake; but God in time is normally worshipped by material means with a view to achieving temporal ends. God in time is the destroyer as well as the creator; consequently it has seemed right and proper to worship him by methods which are as terrible as the destructions he himself inflicts. Hence, in India, the blood sacrifices to Kali in her aspect as Nature-the-Destroyer; hence those

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offerings of children to the Molochs, denounced by the Hebrew prophets; hence the human sacrifices practiced, for example, by the Carthaginians, the Druids, the Aztecs. In all these cases the divinity addressed was a god in time, or some personification of Nature, which is Time itself, the devourer of its own offspring; and in all these cases, too, the purpose of the rite was to obtain some future benefit or to avoid one of those enormous evils which Time and Nature perpetually hold in store. For this it was thought to be worthwhile to pay a high price in that currency of suffering which the Destroyer so evidently valued. The importance of the temporal end justified the use of means which were intrinsically terrible, because intrinsically time-like. Sublimated traces of these ancient patterns of thought and behavior are to be found in certain theories of the Atonement and in the conception of the Mass as a perpetually repeated sacrifice of the God-Man.

In our modern world the deities to whom human sacrifice is offered are personifications, not of Nature, but of man's own, home-made political ideals. These, of course, all refer to events in time — actual events in the past or present, fancied events in the future. And here it should be remarked that the philosophy which affirms the existence and the immediate realizableness of Eternity is related to one kind of political theory and practice; the philosophy which affirms that what goes on in Time is the only reality, results in a different kind of political theory and justifies quite another kind of practice. This has been clearly recognized by Marxist writers. Thus Professor J. B. S. Haldane remarks in his book, *The Marxist Philosophy and the Sciences*, that when Christianity is mainly preoccupied with events in time, it is a "revolutionary religion," and that when, under mystical influences, it stresses the Eternal Gospel, of which the historical or pseudo-historical facts recorded in Scripture are the symbols, it becomes politically "static" and "reactionary."

As it stands, this statement is not entirely true. The aim of all revolutions is to make the future radically different from and better than the past. But among time-obsessed philosophies and theologies there are some whose primary concern is with the past, not the future; and their politics are entirely a matter of preserv-

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ing the *status quo* or getting back to the good old days. But these retrospective time-worshippers have one thing in common with the revolutionary devotees of the bigger and better future: they are prepared to use unlimited violence in order to achieve their ends. It is here that we discover the essential difference between the policies of eternity-philosophers and the policies of time-philosophers. For the latter, the ultimate good is to be found in the temporal world — in a future, where everybody will be happy either because all are doing and thinking something entirely new, or, alternatively, because they are doing and thinking something old, traditional and hallowed. And because the ultimate good lies in time, they feel justified in making use of any temporal means, however diabolic, in order to achieve it. The Inquisition burns and tortures in order to preserve a creed, a ritual and an ecclesiastico-politico-financial organization regarded as necessary to man's salvation. Bible-worshipping Protestants fight long and savage wars, in order to make the world safe for what they imagine to be the genuinely antique Christianity of apostolic times. Jacobins and Bolsheviks are ready to sacrifice millions of human lives for the sake of a political and economic future gorgeously unlike the present. And now Europe and Asia have had to be sacrificed to a crystal-gazer's vision of perpetual Co-Prosperity and the Thousand-Year Reich.

From the records of history it seems to be clear that the theologies and philosophies which take time too seriously are correlated with political theories that inculcate and justify the use of large-scale violence. The only exceptions are those simple Epicurean faiths, in which the reaction to an all too real Time is, "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." This is not a very noble, nor even a very realistic kind of morality. But it seems to make more sense than the revolutionary ethic: "Die (and kill), for tomorrow somebody else will eat, drink and be merry." In practice, of course, the prospect even of somebody else's future merriment is extremely precarious; for the process of wholesale dying and killing creates social, material and psychological conditions that practically guarantee the revolution against the achievement of its ideal ends.

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For those whose philosophy does not compel them to take time with an excessive seriousness, the ultimate goal is to be sought neither in the revolutionary's progressive social apocalypse, nor in the reactionary's revived and perpetuated past, but in an eternal divine Now, which those who sufficiently desire this good can realize as a fact of immediate experience. The mere act of dying is not in itself a passport to eternity; nor can wholesale killing do anything to bring deliverance either to the slayers, or the slain, or their posterity. The peace that passes all understanding is the fruit of the liberation into eternity; but in its ordinary, everyday form, peace is also the root of liberation. That is one of the reasons why the policy correlated with eternity-philosophies is tolerant and non-violent. The other reason is that the eternity whose realization is man's final end is a kingdom of heaven within. Thou art That; and though That is immortal and impassible, the killing and torturing of individual "thous" is a matter of cosmic significance, inasmuch as it interferes with the normal and natural relationship between individual souls and the divine eternal Ground of all being. Every homicidal violence is, over and above everything else, a sacrilegious rebellion against the divine order.

Passing now from theory to historical fact, we find that the religions whose theology have been least preoccupied with events in time and most concerned with eternity, have been consistently the least violent and most humane in their politics. Unlike early Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism (in which an obsession with time overlays an eternity-philosophy and distorts it), Hinduism and Buddhism have never been persecuting faiths, have preached almost no holy wars, and have refrained from that proselytizing imperialism which has gone hand in hand with the political and economic imperialism of the West. For more than four centuries, most of the Christian nations of Europe have spent a good part of their time and energy in attacking, oppressing and exploiting their non-Christian neighbors.

In the course of these centuries many individual churchmen did their best to mitigate the consequences of these iniquities; but none of the major Christian churches officially condemned them.

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The first collective protest against the slave system, introduced by the Spaniards and English into the New World, was made by the Quaker Meeting of Germantown, Pennsylvania. This fact is highly significant. Of all Christian sects in the seventeenth century, the Quakers were the least obsessed with history, the least addicted to the idolatry of things in time. They believed that the inner light was in all human beings, and that salvation came to those who lived in accordance with that light and was not dependent on the profession of belief in historical or pseudo-historical events, or on the performance of certain rites, or on submission to a certain ecclesiastico-politico-financial organization. Moreover, their eternity-philosophy preserved them from the materialistic apocalypticism and Progress-worship which, in recent times, have served to justify every kind of iniquity, on the ground that man's supreme good is in future time and that any temporal means, however terrible, may be used in order to achieve that good. Because Quaker-theology was a form of eternity-philosophy, Quaker political theory rejected war and persecution as means to ideal ends, denounced slavery and proclaimed racial equality.

Another practical corollary of the eternity-philosophies is the doctrine that animals have rights and should be treated with consideration — a doctrine very generally acted upon by Hindus and Buddhists. Judaism and orthodox Christianity taught that animals might be used as things, for the realization of man's temporal ends. Even St. Francis' attitude towards the brute creation was not entirely unequivocal. True, he converted a wolf and preached sermons to birds. But when Brother Juniper hacked the feet off a living pig in order to satisfy a sick man's craving for fried trotters, the saint merely rebuked his disciple for having damaged a valuable piece of private property. It was not until the nineteenth century, when orthodox Christianity had lost much of its influence over European minds, that the notion that it might be a good thing to behave decently towards animals began to make headway.

This new morality was correlated with the new interest in Nature, which had been stimulated by the romantic poets and the

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men of science. Because it was not founded upon a coherent eternity-philosophy, with its doctrine of an indwelling divinity present in all living creatures, the modern movement in favor of kindness to animals was and is perfectly compatible with intolerance, persecution, and systematic exploitation of and cruelty towards human beings. Thus, young Nazis are taught to be gentle with dogs and cats, ruthless in regard to Jews. This is because Nazism is a typical time-philosophy, which proclaims that man's ultimate good exists, not in eternity, but in the future. Jews are, *ex hypothesi*, obstacles in the way of realizing the supreme good; dogs and cats are not. The rest follows logically.

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Lot's Wife

Helene Mullins

When the road has been half traveled,
And home left far behind,
The heart keeps turning backward,
Memories stab the mind.

No further can feet go forward,
Nor can they return to the past.
Inertia stealing over them
Holds them still at last.

Ahead lies an empty future,
Behind a ruined zone.
Paralyzed by indecision,
The body turns to stone.

◎ HELENE MULLINS is the author of several volumes of poetry, including *Earthbound* and *Streams from the Source*. Her poems have appeared in various periodicals, among them *The New Yorker*, *Scribner's*, and the *Delineator*.

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Chinese Problems and American Opinion

Meribeth E. Cameron

ALL OVER the United States today people are asking whether the Chinese can manage their affairs. The question takes variant forms. Can the Chinese stick together after the Japanese are defeated? Will there be civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists? Can the Chinese really build a strong modern state, or had we better count them out in postwar planning and play ball only with Britain and Russia?

These questions are proper ones for Americans to ask, for all our calculations about the future of East Asia turn on whether in the midst of it will be a peaceful, strong, independent China. But it is worth while to note that this is not the only time in the modern history of China when Occidentals have questioned the political competency of the Chinese. Occidental pessimists about the future of China were very vocal in the nineteenth century, as China lost wars and submitted to unpleasant treaties. Later, after the Chinese Republic set up in 1912 had gone to seed and sent up a crop of warlords, some Westerners were asking whether the Chinese would ever be able to reorganize themselves or whether some other and more efficient people (who?) had not better take over as guardians. Chinese Nationalist successes in the late 1920's and Chinese resistance to Japan after 1937 gave the optimists their chance. Now, in 1945, the question about Chinese political capacity, out of fashion for a time, is significantly in the air.

© MERIBETH E. CAMERON, dean and professor of history at Milwaukee-Downer College, has spent some time studying in China on a research grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. Dean Cameron's article, "The Orient Does Not Exist," appeared in the Summer 1944 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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Why has this question cropped up periodically? Perhaps it depends on how long a view you take. The painful vicissitudes of China's development in recent decades give the pessimists ground for their views, but the whole sequence of Chinese history supports the optimists. The very existence of China, huge and ancient, is one of the greatest of historical phenomena. Europe, far smaller, is divided into a patchwork of states. The United States, big but young, owes much of its unity to modern transportation and communication facilities. The Chinese, without telegraphs and railways and despite regional difficulties, have shown an almost unique capacity for unified, durable corporate life.

How were the Chinese able to maintain their unity in the past? Essentially the old China was what Sun Yat-sen called "a federation of families," self-reliant to a high degree and handling for themselves most of the basic problems of government. On the bedrock of family and village self-government was reared an impressive bureaucratic superstructure. The men who filled these higher posts were the products of civil service examinations which attempted to choose those "superior men" whom Confucius had taught should be in public office. This elaborate hierarchy of officials acted in the spirit of the favorite Chinese maxim that you should govern a large state as you would cook a small fish — very little! The bonds which united China were not so much political as cultural. For the educated there was a common written language and literature, and for everyone a belief in "li," the proper conduct of human relations, as the mark which distinguished civilized Chinese from the lesser breeds without the law.

The traditional system of familism plus scholar-bureaucracy was punctuated by periodic rebellion and change of dynasty. However, successful rebellion meant new rulers but not a new system. In fact, rebellion in China in the old days had something of the nature of an election, since it was the only traditional Chinese procedure for securing government by popular consent.

This decentralized, unlegalistic form of government is to modern Occidental systems somewhat as a jellyfish is to the vertebrates. Nevertheless, under it, until about a century ago, the

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Chinese were able not only to govern themselves, but also to maintain a cultural sphere of influence which included most of Eastern Asia. China was "the Middle Kingdom," the center and standard of the Far Eastern civilized world.

But even if the Chinese in the past were able to manage their own affairs very well, does that prove that they can do so under the changed conditions of modern internal and international life? Why has China so often, in recent decades, been a synonym for weakness and confusion? The trouble is that for decades the Chinese, formerly "the most rebellious but the least revolutionary of peoples," have been experiencing a full-scale revolution. This revolution is a consequence of China's relations with the Occident in the past century. We are aware of the social changes going on in China today, but we are too much inclined to attribute them to the war with Japan. War is certainly a solvent of old social forms, but in this case war is only a recent phase of the larger and longer revolution through which China is going, a revolution which began long before the struggle with Japan and which will continue after the war is over.

A hundred years ago China was beginning to feel the pressure of the industrialized, mechanized, warlike Occident. Lost wars, distasteful treaties and internal rebellion produced a new order of problems which the old scholar-bureaucracy could not handle. The nineteenth century had opened with China as "the Middle Kingdom" of the Far East: it closed with China "the sick man of Asia." The Manchu dynasty was overthrown in 1912, and in came not another dynasty but something new under the Chinese sun, a republic. There was a great deal of shortsighted optimism in the West about this evidence of China's "modernization," but alas, the fall of the Manchus was merely the outward sign of the collapse of the old Chinese structure, and the Republic was a strange exotic thing with no real roots among the Chinese masses.

So China floundered miserably for years, and the Chinese revolution became manifestly a real revolution in all dimensions, like the French revolution or the Russian revolution. Lenin once remarked à propos of the Russian revolution that you cannot

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make an omelet without breaking eggs. In China twenty-five years ago the eggs were being broken in quantities but who knew how to make the omelet? Revolution was affecting government, the family system, village life, economic institutions, education. The pessimists were out in force in those days, saying that the Chinese were down and out for good.

The doctrine that China was in senile decay and needed looking after was sweet in Japanese ears. The Occidental states which had dominated China's economic life under the treaty system were busy with World War I and its aftermath, but a new imperialism was rising in the East, that of Japan, to whom revolution in China and Russia offered tempting chances for extension of influence. However, the Chinese refuted the pessimists and annoyed Japanese imperialists by staging a vigorous rally in the mid-1920's. The Chinese Nationalist party, the Kuomintang, emerged as a new unifying force. Its program, Sun Yat-sen's famous Three Principles of nationalism, democracy and people's livelihood, fitted China's new problems. By the end of the 1920's the Kuomintang was the recognized government of the country. China seemed to be emerging from revolutionary chaos.

However, the triumph of the Nationalists brought new problems. Anti-imperialism made the Japanese fearful for their special rights and interests in Manchuria. Warlordism had been only brought to heel, not destroyed. And, by a great split in the revolutionary forces, two major groups of leaders, representing variant principles, stood before the Chinese people, each pointing the way to a new China — the Nationalists and the Communists. Early in the 1920's, Sun had employed Bolshevik advisers, who did much to build up the Kuomintang in party organization, propaganda techniques and military strength. In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek, desirous of the support of conservative, propertied Chinese, broke the Russian connection and staged a drastic purge of Communists. At the same time Stalin was coming into full sway in the U.S.S.R., with his policy of building socialism in one country rather than encouraging world revolution. However, Chinese communism, without Russian aid and with Kuomintang hostility, did not die. In south central China it dug in, adapted

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its program to the desires of Chinese farmers, and instituted a thoroughgoing agricultural "new deal."

The Manchurian crisis of 1931–1933 kept the Nationalists otherwise occupied for a time, but in 1934 Chiang turned his full energies against the Communists. He ousted them from their base, but they withdrew with their armies intact and, after the amazing "Long March," wound up in northwest China. In the years between the Manchurian crisis and the Sino-Japanese war the Nationalists had to decide which was Enemy Number One, the Japanese or the Communists. Then at the end of 1936 came the kidnapping of Chiang Kai-shek by some of his subordinates in northwest China, who had been assigned to oppose the Communists but favored collaboration with them. From that episode came a Communist-Nationalist united front against the Japanese, and on July 7, 1937 the full-scale conflict.

The war brought convincing evidence that the Chinese were still a vital, unified people. In 1940 and 1941 industrialized, well-armed European states went down before Hitler like ninepins, but the Chinese, ill-armed and pacific in temperament, traded space for time and kept on fighting the Japanese. Japanese imperialism had feared an awakened, united China: every blow the Japanese struck at China advanced the growth of Chinese national consciousness. Occidentals were greatly impressed, and China received much praise and sympathy, although little material aid.

But lately the tone of comment about China in the United States has changed. Enthusiasm for China because of her heroic resistance to Japan has given way to doubt about the integrity of the Nationalist regime and emphasis on the possibility of civil war between the Nationalists and Communists. The old question has been raised again — can the Chinese manage their affairs? There are difficulties in the way of forming an accurate and objective estimate of the current situation in China. The Nationalist regime is determined to create a favorable impression abroad in order to maintain its position as one of the "Big Four" of the United Nations, and to that end has practiced censorship and suppression. This policy has boomeranged — for foreign

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correspondents, annoyed by Nationalist efforts to conceal the bad and gild the good, have given the Nationalists an unfavorable press abroad. Certain facts are clear, however, and some conclusions may fairly be drawn.

China today is divided into Occupied China, at least nominally under Japanese control, and Free China. Free China in turn is divided into two sections, the greater part under the direction of the Nationalist government, and the smaller part, in the north, under the control of the Communists. This division is far from watertight. As battle lines shift, the area of Free China shrinks or expands, as the case may be, and behind the Japanese lines there are extensive Chinese guerrilla and governmental organizations. The Nationalist regime, with its wartime capital at Chungking, is recognized by the foreign powers as the government of China. Its greatest moral and political assets are the doctrines of Sun Yat-sen and the ability of Chiang Kai-shek, whom even the Communists have been willing to recognize as the one Chinese who can bring the whole country together under his leadership. Twenty years after his death, Sun's principles of nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood still have real meaning for the Chinese, but chiefly as great and yet unrealized goals. There are members of the Nationalist party who behave like totalitarians and may want to postpone democracy and even people's livelihood to some far future day, but the Kuomintang is pledged to the realization of Sun's objectives and must move toward them, be it ever so slowly.

There is much to be said in criticism of the Nationalist regime — and at present it is being said. Seven years of war on Chinese soil have been a fearful ordeal for the Kuomintang. The Chungking government has tried hard to control "thought" by censorship and secret police methods, but has not controlled inflation. The Nationalist party is broad and includes liberals as well as reactionaries, but the Fascists and conservatives seem to be in the ascendant. The government is dependent on the inland landlord-merchant group and has seemed hesitant about thorough agrarian reform (perhaps the most critical of all China's problems), and about active democracy. Despite the "United Front"

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of 1937, the Nationalists have virtually blockaded the Communist areas. Against the Japanese they make active war; against the Chinese Communists they have practiced a policy of attrition. Recent Japanese victories have made the Chungking government vulnerable to both domestic and foreign criticism. It has reshuffled major office holders, advanced the date for the inauguration of a more democratic government, and undertaken negotiations with the Communists, but its delay in undertaking badly needed internal reforms and its continued feud with the Communists have already cost heavily in reduced fighting power against Japan.

Much of the American press has been as favorable to the Chinese Communists as it has been critical of the Nationalists. Most of the Occidentals who have visited the Communist area have been impressed with the down-to-earth, popular character of the Communist regime. Its leaders are Marxists (and also admirers of Sun Yat-sen) but they grant that China is a long way from the dictatorship of the proletariat. Their practical program combines agricultural reform with political democracy. Private enterprise is still allowed to exist side by side with state and cooperative enterprise. Rents and interest rates have been sharply lowered. There is a graduated income tax. Elective local government councils are functioning. The whole system is closely entwined with the movement of guerrilla resistance against the Japanese in the occupied areas. Despite the fact that the Nationalists have allowed no military and medical supplies to reach them, the Communists, with mass backing, have continued to make the Japanese "control" of North China an uneasy affair.

Are some Nationalists afraid that if Communists and Nationalists could both bid for Chinese popular support on equal terms, the Communists might win the allegiance of the Chinese masses more easily than they? One recent Occidental observer of the Communist areas remarks that the Nationalist government needs to fear the Communists only if it intends to govern badly. The best hope that civil war can be avoided is to be found in Chiang Kai-shek's statement that Kuomintang-Communist relations are a political question, to be handled as such. Yet the

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elements in the Nationalist group that seem to feel that the only good Communist is a dead Communist may push strained relations into actual conflict.

Civil war would be disastrous for China. It would probably not eliminate Communism (which has not been killed by bullets in the past); it would cost China dearly in international prestige; and it might even invite foreign intervention. Moreover, it would postpone constructive economic activity. If China is to be one of the "Big Four" in the new world, she must develop as a modern industrial power. Prerequisite to this is a thoroughgoing reorganization of China's outmoded agrarian system. It is true that to some extent China's industrialization is dependent on factors largely beyond Chinese control — on the nature of the postwar economic order in finance, banking, and tariffs. Even so, the Nationalist government should give its best thought and effort to the improvement of Chinese agriculture, the determination of the regulations to govern industrial development, and the terms for the investment of foreign capital. To waste its resources and energies in civil war would be disastrous economically as well as politically.

Success or failure in the industrialization of China, although vital to the future of both China and the United States, will arouse much less excitement in this country than crises in China's political and military affairs. General Stilwell was dropped, American papers came out with on the whole justifiable criticism of the Chinese government, and immediately Americans began to indulge in a seven-day epidemic of somewhat naive and undue gloom about China's achievements and prospects. Suppose the Kuomintang does not put its house in order. Suppose there is civil war in China. What about the policy and attitude of Americans in such a case? Will we go over to the pessimistic end of the pendulum's swing, and, having only a little time ago hailed the Chinese as a uniquely valorous and united people, now denounce them as a corrupt and good-for-nothing lot?

Civil war, if it does come, will not be decisive evidence that the Chinese are incompetent and backward, and that the postwar world should be shaped for them, not with them. Americans need

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to give up the natural but shortsighted practice of alternately under-estimating and over-estimating the Chinese. Here across the Pacific from us are over 400,000,000 people, deeply civilized, though without benefit of modern industrialism, and essentially unified, though as yet without adequate modern political forms to express and maintain that unity. These people have been in revolution for decades. They have by now pulled through the disintegrative phase of that revolution and are on the upgrade toward a new type of organized life; but they may not reach that goal without a few more convulsions.

For a century, all through China's time of troubles, the policy of the United States has emphasized the preservation of the Open Door and of the territorial integrity of China. The United States has supported this policy through enlightened self-interest, not rosy altruism. It has wanted in the center of East Asia a China free from economic or political domination by other states. The latest and greatest threat to the traditional American policy in the Far East has, of course, been that of Japanese imperialism. Now there are "realists" in the United States who say that we must face the "facts" about China, that the Chinese are still in a muddle and will continue to be, and that we should give up our traditional policy of supporting China's recovery and base our Far Eastern planning on other connections, possibly even on a revised and "reformed" Japan.

Is this the wise reaction to China's present and possible future difficulties? By the long view, it is not. The slow but steady drift of events in the Far East is toward a China once more unified and serving as the "Middle State," the balance wheel of Far Eastern politics. The revolutionary process in China has gone far enough to make it evident that China is experiencing not death, but rebirth. Any American policy which assumes that China will be politically incompetent and internationally insignificant takes a short view, is conceived in error, and will lead to trouble.

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Theme and Variations

Robert A. Hume

Down from the mountain my love comes walking.

Down from the mountain walks my love,
Slender and cool in the evening air;
Slender and cool are the pines above,
And dark as the pines her eyes and hair.

Down from the mountain she comes in her coolness,
Quiet and slender she walks the hills;
Sweet as the pines and dark as the pines
Is her sweet dark hair; and her eyes are dark;
But her flesh is bright as the daffodils.
Down from the mountain walks my love.

Down from the mountain into the hills,
My love comes walking tenderly;
Dark are her eyes, pine-dark her hair;
She walks unhurried, silently,
Slender and cool in the evening air,
Down from the mountain, down from the hills,
Into the long clean valley there
Where daffodils dream in the evening,
And her bright flesh speaks to the daffodils.
Into the valley, down from the hills,
My love comes quietly walking.

● ROBERT A. HUME is associate professor of English at the University of Nevada. Professor Hume is the author of several articles which have appeared in *School and Society* and *The South Atlantic Quarterly*.

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Down from the mountain comes my love,
Slender and cool in the evening air,
And her daffodil flesh is a silent singing
To those who behold her walking there;
And they bless her eyes and her sweet dark hair
As she tenderly walks in the evening.

Down from the mountain walks my love,
Down from the mountain into the hills;
In the valley of gardens walks my love,
And her bright flesh speaks to the daffodils.

Down from the mountain my love comes walking.

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The Humanities in Search of Students

I. L. Kandel

IF ONE may judge from the widespread discussions on every campus and from the vast number of books and articles which have appeared during the war years, the cause of liberal education has been well served at the college level. The elective system, which resulted in the end in the destruction of any semblance of educational values, may not, perhaps should not, disappear entirely, but it will be restricted in order that all students may pursue a balanced course of studies before taking up their own fields of specialization.

Whatever form of organization will be adopted, the humanities — whether as separate disciplines or in survey and interdisciplinary courses — will find an assured place in the college curriculum. The discussions which have taken place in colleges and in local and regional conferences have compelled the specialists to consider the contributions that their own areas of specialization can make to a well-rounded program of education. The crisis in education has served as a challenge both to the humanists, who have begun to recognize the threat to the humanities, and to the scientists who are now called upon to define the meaning of the sciences for the general student. There may, indeed, result an interplay between the humanities and the sciences by which the values of each will be enriched, and the notion that the sciences

© I. L. KANDEL is professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and editor of the *Educational Yearbook*. Professor Kandel is the author of *Intellectual Cooperation, National and International*. His article, "The Educational Problems," appeared in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM on "Group Tensions in Postwar America" (Spring 1945).

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provide the techniques for living in the modern world while the humanities provide the values for living, will disappear.

The general direction of the reform of college education has been defined; there will undoubtedly be some differences in the detailed organization of courses, but the situation is full of promise. There is another issue, however, which has on the whole been ignored in the discussions of the reorientation of education at the college level. This issue is the kind of preparation that students entering college will have received. In the past the curriculum of the high school was, it is claimed, dominated by college entrance requirements. At the beginning of the century the Committee on College Entrance Requirements recommended an expansion — slight to be sure — of the high school curriculum, and enunciated the principle that the proposed curriculum would be sound for all students, whether they planned to go to college or not. Nevertheless the objections to the domination of the high school by college entrance requirements not only continued but increased in volume. Finally time has had its revenge and the high schools are gradually, even if imperceptibly, drifting away from the colleges, while the colleges are slowly surrendering their demands for preparation in specific subjects and replacing them by high school records and/or scholastic aptitude tests.

In an address delivered before the Fiftieth Anniversary Convocation at Teachers College, Columbia University, President James B. Conant discussed the "intense ignorance of the present status and future problems of the public schools" and went on to say: "Indeed, I imagine such ignorance is very widespread among educated people in the United States. I am almost tempted to generalize that the more educated the person, the less his knowledge of secondary school education." And yet it is incumbent on those who are concerned with the preservation of the humanities or of liberal education in general at the college level to consider the part that the high schools must play in laying the foundations for further study. Otherwise the colleges will be compelled in time to provide introductory and preparatory courses to make up for deficiencies in secondary education.

To judge from the latest Report of the President of Johns Hop-

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kins University, Dr. Isaiah Bowman, that time has already arrived. In discussing plans for revisions in the College course of study the University's Committee on Post-War Policy found itself confronted with the question "How shall we bridge the gap between inadequate high school training and a program of study that is really collegiate in character?" "In discussions of the Committee," writes President Bowman, "it developed that most applicants are weak in two basic subjects — English and mathematics — and that a large proportion of freshmen who fail in their first year do so because they are unable to maintain the pace in these two subjects. A smaller number of applicants are deficient in other important subjects, but no matter where the deficiency may be the young man finds it difficult to catch up and at the same time to keep up with his classmates."

The Committee accordingly recommended that entering students report at the University about four weeks before the beginning of the academic year, and be assigned to a program of intensified study in the one or two subjects in which placement examinations reveal that they are weakest. The college, in other words, is now expected to assume the burden of a task which should have been completed in high school.

To understand this situation it is necessary to recall some factors in the recent development of secondary education. Enrollments in high schools have doubled every decade since 1890, with the result that the preparation of the minority of students for college entrance is no longer their chief concern. The increased enrollments brought into the high schools boys and girls with a far wider range of individual abilities and aptitudes than are represented by prospective college students. In an effort to meet the wider range of individual differences the curriculum was expanded until as many as two or three hundred courses — academic, practical, and vocational — were being offered in the high schools of the country.

The expansion was justified not only by a desire to meet the different needs and abilities of the students, but on the principle that one subject is as good as another if taught for the same length of time. Further, through a misinterpretation of the results

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of research on the subject, the doctrine of formal discipline was discarded. Dr. Dewey in his *Democracy and Education* quotes the words of an American humorist that "It makes no difference what you teach a boy so long as he doesn't like it"; were he living today the humorist would say that "It makes no difference what you teach a boy so long as he likes it." On the basis of quantitative measurement by which a unit of one subject is equal to a unit of any other subject, educational values have gone by the board and graduation from high school has come to mean the completion of from fourteen to sixteen units of something or other, with such limitations as may still be imposed by college entrance requirements. The high school curriculum, like the college curriculum, became a series of interchangeable parts, each taught for the same length of time.

The rapid increase in high school enrollments and the equally rapid expansion in the number of courses had another serious consequence in the inadequate supply of competent teachers. There is ample evidence that a large number of teachers in high schools are each year assigned to teach subjects in which they have themselves had no preparation. The fault lies not with the teachers but with certificating authorities which grant blanket certificates to teach in high school without specifying competence in any field. It is this fact — that teachers have also come to be regarded as interchangeable parts — that has brought so many subjects into disrepute. No one would deny that not all students can be expected to have the ability to profit from the traditional or so-called academic curriculum. The probability is, however, that a larger number than at present could succeed even in this curriculum if the American public were as much concerned about the supply of capable teachers as it is about the grandeur and size of its school buildings.

The inadequate accomplishment of the high schools has been noted by two authorities in the field of secondary education — by Dr. Thomas H. Briggs in *The Great Investment* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930) and Dr. John L. Tildsley in *The Mounting Waste of the American Secondary School* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936). In the past thirty years commissions — some dealing with the whole

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subject of secondary education, some with special disciplines or problems — have succeeded each other, but it would be hazardous to claim that the situation has been improved. The war years have, indeed, brought new problems and have given a new glamor to practical and vocational education. Thus a movement to get rid of what has been referred to as the Procrustean educational bed has resulted in a situation which calls for one of the labors of Hercules.

To this task two committees have addressed themselves. Of these the first was a Special Committee appointed in 1940 by the American Youth Commission "to organize the preparation of a brief report presenting the major needed changes in the curriculum of American secondary schools on which it should now be possible to secure agreement." Later in the same year the Committee published its report, *What the High Schools Ought to Teach* (American Council on Education, Washington, D. C.).

The recommendations of the Committee are based on the change in the high school population, the different social origins and varied vocational interests of the students, the need of a program to meet the interests of the great majority, and the fact that only a minority will continue their education in college. Hence the Committee concludes that "it seems evident that instruction with regard to society cannot be postponed to the period of college attendance. If the general populace is to be intelligent about the issues that confront communities and the nation, there must be instruction in the secondary schools with respect to these issues." The chief defects of the high schools arise from the fact that "a great many pupils in these schools have reading abilities of the fifth or even of the fourth grade level," from the presence of slow learners who lack either interest in a particular subject or proper motivation for study, and from the general inappropriateness of the curriculum.

The Committee accordingly recommends concentration on reading, work experience, and social studies. Work experience is advocated in order to meet a natural urge of young people to give expression to their energy and to acquire the habits of working steadily for eight hours a day. *The report makes no reference to the*

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desirability of developing in students habits of working steadily at their studies.

The program of social studies is designed to replace some of the material now used in many history and civics courses, so that "young people should be able to form wise judgments based on knowledge of the facts." Forgetting the large number of fourth or fifth grade readers and the slow learners, the Committee proceeds to present a list of topics which would tax the intelligence of the ablest students.

As to the conventional subjects, they should be "re-examined and criticized with a view to injecting into them the same liberal spirit as that which is exemplified in the new courses" — reading, work experience, and social studies. The material in English should be intellectually stimulating and adapted to the mental and reading abilities of the students. Courses in mathematics should be concentrated on certain fundamentals and the abstruse refinements and highly specialized methods of mathematical manipulation should be eliminated. Foreign languages consume too much time, a great deal of which could be better spent on the newer courses. Finally, the courses in the natural sciences are encyclopedic, fill the memory with facts, and fail to stimulate scientific thinking.

The report on *What the High Schools Ought to Teach* was followed in 1944 by a more extensive report, prepared by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, on *Education for All American Youth.* In an introductory chapter on "The History that Should Not Happen," a retrospect supposedly written in 1964, appears the statement that "no one seems to have noted that the [familiar prewar] pattern, too, was shattered beyond repair; that the end of the war was the end of an epoch to which there could be no return, in education or in any other aspect of life." It is claimed further that "the reason for the incapacity of education during postwar years was the tremendous pressure of the traditional educational program."

Accordingly a new start must be made and new programs of education must be developed to meet the needs of *all* American youth. The report presents accounts of two hypothetical experi-

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ments — one in a rural and the other in an urban high school with the course extended by two years to include community institutes (junior colleges) as part of the organization to be developed ultimately. The traditional program by subjects is abandoned in favor of "curriculum areas."

In the rural high school and community institute the curriculum areas include: preparation for occupations (including work in science, mathematics, social studies, English, or foreign language preparatory to advanced study in college or university as well as education for agricultural, mechanical, commercial, and homemaking occupations); education for civic competence; personal development; and elective studies or individual projects. The so-called subjects are apparently to be taught incidentally as the need for them arises. "Most of a student's learning . . . is directly *related to his purposes*. The student *wants* to do something, either as an individual or as a member of a group. He applies himself diligently to learn the things needed to do what he wants to do, and thereby develops habits of application and industry." It will be noted that the academic subjects are now considered to be vocational and not a contribution to general education, and that the high school student is somehow expected to know "the things needed to do what he wants to do."

The curriculum areas in the urban high school and community institute consist of: individual interests (avocational, cultural, or intellectual); vocational preparation (as above with the omission of the agricultural occupation); science (methods, principles and facts needed by all students); common learnings ("planned to help students grow in competence as citizens of the community and the nation; in understanding of economic processes and of their roles as producers and consumers; in cooperative living in family, school and community; in appreciation of literature and the arts; and in the use of the English language"); and health and physical education.

Such, in brief, is the pattern of the postwar high school. The academic traditionalist may be startled by it but his fears lest the special subjects or the systematic study of organized bodies of knowledge may be ignored are met by the statement that "the

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conventionally required subjects would appear in the new course, insofar as they were needed to meet the common needs of youth. English language, literature, history, and science would certainly be found among the 'Common Learnings,' though possibly in unaccustomed settings." Ample time would, it is claimed, be found in the total program for any student who so wished to complete the courses required for admission to college. In the light of the results achieved in the sequentially organized conventional subjects, as noted by Dr. Briggs and Dr. Bowman, the conventionally-minded academician may be disposed to doubt whether better results will be attained through learning these subjects incidentally as and when needed.

It is not without significance, perhaps, that in a pamphlet, *Planning for American Youth*, published by the National Association of Secondary School Principals as a summary of *Education for All American Youth*, no provision is made for a representative of college education in the proposed Commission on Postwar Education which a superintendent will appoint to recommend improvements in the school program. The Commission is to consist of school people (elementary and high school principals and teachers), laymen representing citizens' and vocational advisory committees, and directors of research, curriculum, and instruction. In the past the non-academic students were the forgotten youth; in the future the position may be reversed and the forgotten youth may be those who have both the ability and interest to engage in academic studies.

In making its recommendations the Educational Policies Commission was undoubtedly influenced by a number of factors. Of these the first is dissatisfaction with a program of studies which was expanding so rapidly as to become unwieldy and educationally meaningless. Whether the proposed program will be more manageable or whether it will have more affirmative values still remains to be seen; much will depend on the nature of the detailed courses of study which are yet to be elaborated, and much more on the availability of competent teachers. The second factor is a desire to provide a common education for all youth to give them that common store of reference which they will need as

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future citizens if they are to be capable of mutual understanding in the interests of a common democratic goal.

Despite references to individual needs and abilities and to guidance the Commission failed to take into consideration the broader meaning of the volume of literature which is now available on individual differences of intellectual capacity and aptitudes. The great ideal of American education has always been the provision of equality of opportunity; there is some danger lest in the proposed program, as in the past, equality is being interpreted as identity. It is an obligation of a democracy to raise the intellectual levels of all its citizens; it is equally an obligation of a democracy to see to it that those who have the ability to become the future experts are not sacrified in the interests of the rest. If the war has had anything to contribute to the organization of education it has been to emphasize the importance of providing adequately for the emergence of experts — not only in the scientific and technical fields but also in the various branches of the humanities.

To suggest the importance of meeting the needs of those students who have the ability and aptitude to profit from academic studies, well-organized and planned rather than left to the accident of incidental learning, is not to suggest a class education. On the basis of what is now known about individual differences and of tests and measurement of abilities and aptitudes the task for educational statesmanship is so to distribute educational opportunities that each student can pursue the course of studies best adapted to his abilities. That common denominator, which the two reports — *What the High Schools Ought to Teach* and *Education for All American Youth* — consider essential, can be included even if programs of education are differentiated. From the point of view of the needs both of individuals and of American culture, however, the programs recommended in the two reports tend to overemphasize work experience, vocational preparation, and immersion in the immediately contemporary and even local through social studies.

The importance of laying sound foundations at the secondary level for those students who show promise in the scientific fields has already been recognized. President Conant recently proposed

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that the Federal Government offer college scholarships to students who show high promise in science and technology. There is here a challenge to the high schools to offer more than incidental training in the sciences.

The importance of preserving the humanities in American culture has been recognized by those concerned with education at the college level. The time has come when the movement stimulated by this recognition should be extended from the college to the secondary school. If this challenge is not taken up, it may not be long before the humanities will be in search of students.

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"For the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing"

William Haller

MILTON'S *Areopagitica* is justly celebrated as the most gallant and eloquent defense in English of liberty of the press, but it brought something much more than eloquent speech and gallantry of spirit to the understanding of the age-old problem of liberty in the state. When Milton wrote his address, he had actually little to fear from the threat of his opponents to invoke against him, for reasons of their own, the recently adopted printing ordinance. Ever since the days of Elizabeth, governments had endeavored, by some system of licensing the press, to provide for copyright, for the protection of the public from whatever was commonly regarded as offense, and for the security of government itself. But no government had ever succeeded in seriously impeding the book trade from supplying reading-matter of all sorts to a public whose appetite for print grew by what it fed on. When powerful interests felt themselves endangered by the press, savage prosecutions sometimes ensued, but over the years these cases were sporadic and ineffectual. When the Long Parliament convened in 1640, control broke down completely, and nothing availed to restore it.

All this Milton knew, and his protest against censorship was

© Professor of English at Columbia University, WILLIAM HALLER is one of the editors of the Columbia edition of *The Works of John Milton*. Professor Haller is also the author of *The Rise of Puritanism*, and the editor of *Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution*.

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not written out of any urgent need for defending either himself or his cause. He wrote, as he says, to "admonish the state" — that is to say, to make parliament understand that the rise of the press and the spread of printed books had altered irretrievably the conditions under which government in England must henceforth operate. The beast of many heads had become a public, swept as before by passions and grievances, but equipped as never before with a vocabulary of images and ideas and an easy mechanism for expressing its thoughts and desires and making them swiftly current.

The fact was, then, that by 1644 anything like rigid enforcement of censorship was bound to be, in Milton's phrase, like trying to pound up the crows by shutting the park gate. But this was true only because the English people were convinced that it must be true. More powerful than any decree of the crown or order of parliament were the ideas and convictions concerning reason, belief, conscience, and expression which had by this time made fast their hold upon men's minds, even upon the minds of the persecutors themselves. The worst tyrants of that age, to us who have seen what tyranny in our age has done, seem but half-hearted bunglers at their work.

Of the many examples which might be cited in illustration of this point, one must suffice. When Archbishop Laud finally got Prynne condemned in Star Chamber for repeated outrageous attacks in the press, he demurred, not, to be sure, against chopping off the culprit's ears or putting him in prison, but to denying him the use of books; no man with a soul to be saved, not even Prynne, was to be deprived of the means of grace. Rulers might put a man in jail for printing sedition or, what was much the same thing, heresy; they might have him whipped or set in the stocks; but they did not like to liquidate unrepentant sinners out of hand or deprive them of means and opportunity for saving their souls. And they believe without question that, of all the means of grace, none was so essential as the word, which was to say, the word in print.

"For books," Milton wrote, "are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that

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soul was whose progeny they are." "Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God as it were in the eye." This was no new or strange doctrine to Milton's contemporaries. Reading and writing had not yet come to seem a mere mechanical process for making men buy or fight at will. The whole point and meaning of the religious revolution through which the age was passing was that the decisive spiritual experience of a man's life should center in the reading of a book, of one certain book above all others, but inevitably of others too. Almost half the books printed in England before 1640 dealt with religion, and the nearer 1640 approached the greater the number of books published and circulated on all subjects, and the greater the proportion with a religious purpose or coloring.

But the intent and purpose of much of the publishing, as of all of the preaching, that went on was to send men to the Bible, searching for the key to their own inner lives and the perfect rule of government for family, church, and state. They did not always find what they looked for; they did not all find the same thing; but they learned to read with mind and soul, and did not stop with reading the Bible. Nothing did so much to foster the production of books as the enormous literature of edification, comment, and controversy which the Bible evoked. The book trade flourished, however, by publishing anything, profane or sacred, that people would buy. And since God was believed to reveal himself in his works as well as in his word, all books might be of use, even to the Bible's devotees. Hence the books which furnished ideas to poets and dramatists were also drawn upon to confirm, illustrate, and of course corrupt the teachings of the pulpit.

But, Milton declared, "Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions." Did his critics expect that "after all this light of the gospel . . . all this continual preaching," after "all the sermons, all the lectures preached, printed, vended in such numbers," after all the books published, "to the contempt of an imprimatur," by the preachers themselves — did they expect the English people to remain "an unprincipled, unedified, and laic rabble?"

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Did parliament suppose that it could now "suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city?"

Thanks to the expedient unacknowledged tolerance instituted by Elizabeth, revoked in vain by Charles, and exploited to the full by his enemies, the English had been for a long time enjoying a large if undefined liberty of thought and expression without having to contend for it or theorize much about it, and they found themselves thoroughly prepared to wage the war of ideas which revolution provoked. Milton's description of them is famous: "A nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtile and sinewy to discourse"; "a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies"; a people wholly taken up "even in the midst of war, with the study of the highest and most important matters to be reformed . . . disputing, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of." How many of us, in these days, have not called to mind Milton's description of London, "mansion house of liberty," full of anvils and hammers fashioning the instruments of war, but not less full of pens and heads, "sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and fealty, the approaching reformation?"

If we are inclined to think that all this is mere Miltonic grandiloquence, we have but to remember the books that had been printed in England in the period, little more than a single lifetime, just before Milton wrote *Areopagitica* — the books which no censorship had ventured or been able to repress; the books which in some measure, at least, had made the English the kind of people they were. The list starts with many of the greatest books of all time: the scriptures and the classics; Shakespeare, Spenser, and the great poets and playwrights of the Elizabethan age; Hooker, Bacon, and Coke; the preachers who prepared men's minds for the Puritan Revolution and the planting of English civilization in America; and not to be forgotten, the great flood of publications called forth by the Puritan Revolution itself.

When we consider what books and how many had found their

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way into English print by 1644, we cannot suppose that Milton was really much concerned about the printing ordinance. What did concern him very deeply was the situation in the state which unrestricted access to books had brought about. The godly divines of the Westminster Assembly might jangle over dependencies and independencies in the church. Champions of sects and parties might contend against repression. Milton spoke to parliament for the "nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies" which, he believed, his countrymen at least had it in them to become. He sought to make clear that the most important fact with which parliament was confronted was that "disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing" public which the printing press and its works had called into being. Here was the inescapable condition which no government in England could henceforth escape. The liberty which, he says, parliament itself has won for the people has "enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up [their] apprehensions." They can grow "ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish," but only if their rulers are content to grow the same. There can be no suppression of knowledge at any other price: "Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves."

But granted that the liberty to read and know and speak and print was now less than ever to be denied, how was that liberty to be implemented in the state? This was, indeed, the fundamental constitutional question raised by the Puritan Revolution, and Milton's answer to it must not be misunderstood or misjudged. One point is clear: he was willing to accord special privilege of speaking to no church or priestly caste. Yet on the other hand he did not foresee the development of all that apparatus of newspapers, political parties, and popular elections which have since come to seem the indispensable machinery of liberty in the state. It would have been strange, given his background, education, and position, if he had done so. He was not, like John Lilburne, himself one of the people, with the methods, the ideas, and the idiom of the conventicle, the city street, and the army camp at his tongue's end. He was a renaissance scholar and man of letters, an English protestant reformer, bent upon making his learn-

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ing and skill serviceable to his country. He knew himself to be master of the wisdom contained in the scriptures and the classics. He was master also of what he called "those organic arts" — logic, rhetoric, and poetry — "which," he declared, "enable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style."

Political democracy, as Lilburne and the Levellers alone among his contemporaries conceived it, cannot be said to have been contrary to his principles so much as it was outside his knowledge and experience. He did not oppose it in the person of Lilburne, though ordered to do so by Cromwell and the Council of State. The kind of parliament he conceived as standing at the center of power in the state, the kind of parliament he thought of himself as addressing, was an Areopagus, a great council of worthies, hearkening at all times to instruction and admonition from sages and prophets who had learned from the word of God and the literature of the ancients to distinguish "what is infallibly good and happy in the state of man's life, what in itself evil and miserable." Who could be better qualified to speak on behalf of the people than such men? To what greater duty were such men called?

Milton's expectations concerning the organization of free government in England were, of course, not destined to be realized. England did not become a classical republic; the Long Parliament did not develop into the senate of a humanistic Utopia, transfigured by the light of the Puritan Zion. Neither, to be sure, did England become, until two hundred years later, anything like a parliamentary democracy. But so far as concerns Milton, all this is beside the point. The point is that, impractical and academic though his notions of the structure of the state may have been, he stated unmistakably the conditions upon which, as the result of the popularization of knowledge brought about by the printing press, the government of a free people must rest.

Puritan that he was, he could not fail to assert the sole sufficiency of the scriptures in all things, but he had learned from the poets, philosophers, orators, and historians of Greece and Rome, more than from any other teachers, what human meaning to

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make of Moses and Paul — that is to say, of the Biblical epic of man's fall and redemption. He learned to believe that truth exists, one and entire, but revealed to man in his fallen state only in partial glimpses and reflections, mingled always with its opposite. Reason, however, can lead us to the knowledge of truth by ceaseless searching, testing, and choosing. Creation is but the theater, experience the term, error the function, and liberty the necessary condition for the exercise of reason and the attainment of knowledge. Knowledge, gained, can be communicated by discourse, and communicated, can be understood. Truth can, step by step, be distinguished from its contrary, proclaimed, and heeded, to the continuous and progressive good of man and the state, "even to the reforming of reformation itself."

"Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather; that which purifies is trial, and trial is by what is contrary." The condition which produced all that activity of heads and pens and printing presses with which parliament was confronted was nothing less than the condition into which mankind fell with Adam, the condition in which it must remain until the second coming of Christ, the condition from which no government on earth can be exempt. Governments must expect to have to govern as men must expect to have to live; they must expect that things will always be bad, but, no matter how bad they are, that they may grow worse or better. Governments must expect to have to learn like the rest of us, and since they have to learn, it behooves them to be willing to be taught by anyone who thinks he knows anything concerning this mystery of good and evil. Provision must somehow be made, in the very structure of the state itself, if the state is to endure, for the free play of discussion, complaint, and opposition, and for constant adjustment and readjustment to the changing circumstances of human existence. Milton did not discern precisely the form of political organization by which this came to be accomplished in England, but he did perceive the necessity which a virtually untrammeled press had rendered so urgent.

Areopagitica opens and closes, as according to the rules of rhetoric which Milton so well understood it ought to have done,

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with the clearest statement of this central principle and of the practical inference that parliament was supposed to draw from it. No principle of politics has better stood the test of time. "This is not," he begins, "the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the commonwealth: that let no man in this world expect." And he reiterates in conclusion, "errors in a good government and in a bad are equally almost incident." Any government may be misinformed, mistaken, or misled. But there can be no excuse or escape for rulers who, forgetting they are men, refuse to learn. "But when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty obtained that wise men can look for." And again at the end he says, "But to redress willingly and speedily what hath been erred, and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertisement more than others have done a sumptuous bribe, is a virtue (honoured lords and commons!) answerable to your highest actions."

The quotation from Euripides which Milton put upon his title-page, and translated for the benefit of the Long Parliament and of future generations, summed up the whole matter:

> This is true liberty, when free-born men,
> Having to advise the public, may speak free,
> Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise;
> Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace:
> What can be juster in a state than this?

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Maine Summer

Joyce Horner

This summer is memory-color:
Hills over the bay
(Heat-streaked, Aegean-color), blue trees
Where islands ride anchored, blueberries;
Color of childhood, only here, now,
Day after day.

Summer in essence, idea,
But present, sweet
As these blueberries in the mouth
(Warm, grape-bloomed); color of south
And drowned horizon, only near, here
Under my feet.

So much, so much of this color —
The pail fills,
I tread on blueberries, yet wading
Deep in summer, now even, I watch it fading
Into the blue of childhood, the horizon,
The far hills.

© JOYCE HORNER, a member of the Department of English at Mount Holyoke College, is the author of *The Wind and the Rain*, a novel which has been published in America and England, and is now in the process of translation into Swedish. Miss Horner's poems have been published in *The Atlantic Monthly* and *Commonweal*.

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Debussy

Joseph Zukerman, U.S.N.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY died in 1918, physically broken, musically bankrupt, and embittered by a world which to him seemed everywhere hostile. Admittedly he was a very important man; we hear so much about his impressionism, his full-tone scale, his *Children's Corner*, and the vocal line of *Pelléas*. Nobody, in fact, would have any difficulty in identifying him as the first modern composer.

Consistently enough, most people's attitudes towards him are as confused as their thinking about more modern and more iconoclastic composers. Historically important he is conceded to be, but his music itself, as distinct from its parallel fifths and its meaning for us, seems to be generally underestimated and misunderstood. Some respect him dutifully as a harmonic innovator, others necessarily admire a name linked to Manet and Mallarmé, too many others regard him as just another minor composer, a sort of sophisticated French Grieg. It may be ingenuous, in this lean and strained year of recordings, to take heart from the large number of Debussy records which have been issued. But if they do not reflect an increasing interest in Debussy, perhaps they will stimulate such attention; at least the music-lover can now hear works which before were out of reach, and which can lead him to truer understanding and appreciation.

The reason Debussy has been eclipsed stems directly, I think, from the paralyzing tendency to base conceptions of music on musicology, which seeks to define artistic norms and trends, rather than on music itself. We are taught to take our artists in

◎ Formerly an instructor of physics at Princeton University, JOSEPH ZUKERMAN is now doing research work in the United States Navy. Mr. Zukerman is the music critic of *The American Hebrew*.

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schools instead of as individual human beings, and to gauge carefully their mutual influences and their established places in the history of Art. Debussy does not fit in with the main stream of things; he is a stranger to the transrhenane series which begins arbitrarily with Bach and at the time of writing shows no sign of coming to an end. Baldly stated, I suppose that nobody will call him an inferior composer because he ignored the powerful tradition that Strauss was so happy to inherit. But subconsciously our thinking has been edged into just these channels by the classification system of music appreciation, which, with all its tidy and efficient habits, has very little use for solitary men like Debussy. The first step towards a real love of music is to knock over the straw men erected by musicology to tell us what music ought to be. It cannot tolerate the freedom of mind that Debussy's genius requires in the listener.

It is the novelty of his fundamental psychological approach to music that makes Debussy so difficult to pigeon-hole. The problem which thinking people, particularly artists, have to face, is the conflict between emotion, which is the raw material of music, and the inhibiting forces which the accumulated mass of civilization constantly pits against it. Almost all composers (and listeners too, for that matter) conclude that music is an escape of one kind or another, an Elysium of self-expression where the vicissitudes of life are at last left far behind. Some guiltily turn their backs completely on civilization; others face it sideways, and keep glancing the other way; a few face it squarely and finally triumph over its slings and arrows. But Debussy never saw life as the villain which music, to be valid, must somehow circumvent. He accepted life and enjoyed it, and put it all down in his music. (Incidentally, one good reason for calling him the first modern composer is the fashion which this attitude started for subsequent writers.) Listening to his music, we see how impossible it would have been for Debussy to have been otherwise; for no other composer, with one possible exception, ever felt the force of contemporary culture so strongly. Sophisticated to the finger-tips, acutely aware of himself and every movement around him, sensitive, self-analytical, hyper-civilized, he was immersed in the

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stream that was fed by DuBellay, Molière, Voltaire, Baudelaire and Proust. Every phrase of his reflects the comprehension, subtlety, sensibility — *ironie et pitié* if you will — of the great tide of civilization from which he saw no need to turn in his musical expression.

There is no finer example of this than the album of *Songs of Debussy* (Victor M-322), sung beautifully by Maggie Teyte accompanied by Cortot — not a new album, but out of print for goodness knows how long and just now reissued. Listening to them for their emotional substance, you will notice at once that Debussy's emotional range is small, and that his great strength and also his great limitation comes in the depiction of emotions which are directly connected with the sensuous. It is clear to most people, for instance, that Debussy often deals with sexual representations, and it is only necessary to compare one such piece of his with *Tristan* to hear how real, not to say healthy, Debussy's feelings are. There always is a vital bridge to real existence in his music. No other composer has had his success with nature pictures: they have an actuality, an almost tactile quality, which we are taught is quite impossible in music. A limited emotional range, true, but how exquisite! We are not all able to transcend life as utterly as Schubert, the seer, or Beethoven, the intellectual. Debussy — and Mozart — can speak to us in our own terms.

For Mozart also was a man who felt himself an essential part of civilization and shared with his whole soul the culture and humanism of his time. Every sentence of his, too, has acknowledged life as he lived it — and I am not speaking of the powder and perriwigs so well beloved of the writers of program notes; the comparison with Haydn should be enough to quell this notion. No operas, to take the most obvious example, have anywhere near so close a bond with reality as do Mozart's. Mozart and Debussy were the only classical composers who were really and truly men of the world; both show it clearly in their music. Like Mozart's, Debussy's intellect turned to the subtlety of form, and in a great work like the three orchestral *Images* he constructed a formal edifice as wonderful as one of Mozart's works.

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Of these pieces, composed around 1910, *Iberia* is known, thanks to its nationalistic tinge, but most people had not so much as heard *Gigues* or *Rondes de Printemps* before they were issued by Victor (M-945) a while back, as played by Monteux with the San Francisco Orchestra. There are no loose ends in the *Images;* the material is drawn tight and sinewy, the early lushness is gone, there is a marvellously organic and spontaneous growth of ideas, a profundity of musical ideas, and also as fine and intricate and logical a whole as an elegant proof from number theory.

Like Mozart, again, Debussy in some mysterious way enters into his medium and just from the sounds alone, it seems, ekes out an intelligence and a perfection. In this intimate sympathy for his timbre Debussy stands out as one of the few masters of musical color that we have had; and in his building of form from the logical directions of the music itself, rather than from an arbitrary plan or from the holdovers of the past, he is still one of the most modern of composers. All of this is an intellectual achievement only to be compared with the work of Mozart; but while Mozart's wonders come from the beauty that he could pour into the mold of the forms of his time, Debussy's come in the creation of new molds, molds which nobody so far has had the brain to be able to emulate, let alone crystallize into a modern tradition.

But celebration itself is not enough to produce great music. The musical content of the *Images* is, after all, the same that had been occupying Debussy all his life. We hear the same sensuous beauty, set forth with all the awareness of the civilization of which he was so much a part; the difference between *Rondes* and one of those little songs is one of degree rather than kind, simply a question of intensity of expression. No, this is the point at which Debussy should have gone on to say bigger things, and such, for one reason or another, he could not do. He is saying in golden terms what he had said before more metely in silver; the work suggests an epithet which you could not in a million years apply to Mozart — top-heavy.

Some will say that Debussy's acceptance of civilization had inhibited his capacity for a deeper, more comprehensive set of

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emotions. This may be true, but it is very important to realize that the fault lies in Debussy, not in his method. For Mozart, with whom civilization had struck a much harder bargain, could feel and express the most sublime and profound of feelings; there is no hint of emotional atavism in his work. Generally speaking, the view of conventional musical esthetics (if so vague a set of ideas merits the name) is that music has no right to deal with actual life: that it should go under, above or around life, after the example of the great composers of the past. Without sophistry, the answer to that is to listen to the music. Is it right or wrong? The music is basic, not the ideas about it; and for each composer who strikes us intuitively as valid we must modify or revoke the theory instead of rejecting him because his foot does not fit the glass slipper. To me Debussy is as valid as Bach, and we must learn to fashion the slipper out of more elastic material.

The fault, to repeat, was in the man, not in his approach to his art. Nobody perceived this more keenly than Debussy himself. He had quite early come to a full expression of what he had to say, a process which took Beethoven some forty odd years; and these works are unparalleled in music. Thereafter, with characteristic integrity, he did not (like all his contemporaries) try to force an emotion which he did not really have and produce sentimentality; nor did he falter and try to retrace his steps. He took the only path left to him, which was to develop his powers of intellect; but he knew that this was no substitute for music. And Debussy, in fact, quit as a composer, hardly producing any music at all in his last years. In the few works he did write he abandoned all trace of emotional meanings, and he did not always even have the heart to exercise his intellectual virtuosity. There are two recent Columbia albums of too late Debussy; *En Blanc et Noir*, three pieces for two pianos, written in 1915 (Bartlett and Robinson, X-242) and the *Sonata for Violin*, his very last work in 1918 (Szigeti and Foldes, X-241). Debussy could not even be entirely serious about composing when the life-blood had ebbed; this music is simply vacuous and trivial. No one but a student who might want to sense once again the wizard hand of the builder with musical blocks and hear again the matchless pianis-

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tics (the sense of medium again) would have any desire to hear them more than once.

One might with profit compare and contrast Debussy with Beethoven. The quality which developed constantly throughout the latter's career was also the power of intellect, which reached its apotheosis in the string quartets of his last years. While Mozart's intellectual workings seem to unearth from themselves latent miraculous aspects of his soul, Beethoven, who was completely innocent of the development of the mind for its own joys, almost consciously used intellect as a tool to register more completely the emotions which he sought to transcribe. And in his last years, through this intellectual strength, he seemed to transcend existence, and expressed the most undeniably supreme emotions that have been set down in art. Debussy too in his last years sharpened his intellect, and he too sounded the highest levels of abstraction. As he rose higher and higher, the atmosphere became light, infinitely exhilarating; and his mind-processes functioned with superhuman ease. But this is no way to reach the sun, and only in the myth can you get so close as to melt your wings. Beethoven and Debussy lived about the same number of years, and for both the last ones were wrecked by illness and misery. But in their very last works Beethoven was never psychologically stronger. Debussy was never more insignificant. To say that Beethoven lived past his artistic prime is an idiocy reserved for his contemporaries, and few heed Mr. W. J. Turner when he claims a like distinction for Mozart. But in Debussy's case it is not to be gainsaid. After the group of works which culminated in the *Images* there is nothing to hold his or our interest.

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Mountains at Noon

Charles Edward Eaton

Now are the mountains stretched out
like blue horses asleep.
Clear is their dream of power and peace.
Where they richly lie, deep

At the end of vision, sky
is meditative mild;
It seems that grazing near time's edge
their hearts were reconciled.

What massive impulse made them pause
where Forever rose
And kneel down at the brink of earth
to consecrate repose?

© CHARLES EDWARD EATON has been American Vice Consul in the Cultural Relations Division of the American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro since 1942. Mr. Eaton is the author of *The Bright Plain*, a volume of poems.

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The War-In-Peace Plan

Paul P. Bushnell

HAVING tried the war cure again for its ills, the world is now resolved, one might almost say resigned, to try the peace cure once more. This time its mood is skeptical, even cynical. Will the evil cycle never end? Is war, after all, too deeply embedded in human nature ever to be uprooted? Fortunately for us these questions are not really crucial. For mankind's basic question is not how to uproot the war system; it is how to solve, once and for all, the war problem. There is a difference. Consider the unimaginative monotony of the traditional juxtaposition of war and peace — mere temporal alternation. Surely something better could be designed. Perhaps a simultaneous arrangement involving some sort of interpenetration or blending of the two would offer a practical solution of the problem for our age. Yet until now no such proposal has ever been made. Lest this sound too ominous, I hasten to add that the form of cure to be advocated here is positively the most humane and idealistic that contemporary human nature will permit. Furthermore, though simple and earthy in character, it is actually precision-built to the specifications of the most advanced sciences of human behavior. Unfortunately, it will likely present hazards to some readers — hazards, frankly, to certain of their cherished notions, prejudices, and illusions.

© PAUL P. BUSHNELL is assistant professor of education at The College of Wooster, and is now engaged in teaching English in the Naval Academic Refresher Course. Professor Bushnell's article, "The Unknowing Mind: A Study in the Dynamics of Ignorance," appeared in the Summer 1938 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. In the satire on "planning" and "planners" which appears in these pages, he has used the tone of Swift's "A Modest Proposal" as a model.

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It must be understood, therefore, that all readers continue at their own risk.

Our starting point must be the vital question of how much light present-day knowledge of human nature can throw on the war problem. The answer is at first disappointing. Man remains the unknown, full of contradictions and mysteries. So mistaken have been most predictions of his behavior in concrete instances that we now habitually look for contrary reactions: peace efforts to provoke war, anti-strike legislation to foment strikes, city streets to breed jungle fighters, security-clutching to create insecurity, and economic planning to bring about confusion and injustice. Still, history must hold some lessons for the open-minded student. It does. Almost every page in the chronicles of man shows him as a being with but thinly disguised and spasmodically controlled cravings for blood and thunder, for danger, crisis, conflict, violence, and destruction.

The only possible objection to this conclusion, superficially convincing, is that people, the same people, so obviously hate these very things. And it must be the central or "real" self that hates — except, of course, in the case of our enemies! Modern psychiatry unfortunately permits no such consolation. It teaches that the personality represents a precarious, unstable equilibrium of conflicting forces, and that every love is counterbalanced by some degree of hate for the same object. The two sets of emotions are equally "central" to the self, and are capable of erupting in close succession or, under some circumstances, together. Truly we need the advice recently given in a popular magazine on "How to Get Along with People You Love."

A dire social moral now appears. Even if society should sometime appear to win a final victory over the forces of violence, the victory could only be short-lived. Men require peace, of course, but they must *also* have their danger and destruction. So if the accustomed perils and calamities which have served this latter purpose are ever removed by science and a planned social order, there can be no escape from the need to provide planned danger and destruction.

The search for a danger-system that might take the place

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of war should lead us first to ask if there is not some long-familiar practice, some wholesome folly perhaps, that could be suitably dressed up for the role. The economic struggle comes first to mind. It has long beeen recognized as a special kind of warfare. But in its crude, primitive form of cutthroat competition it is now hopelessly outmoded. It is clumsy, wasteful, and resistant to careful planning and streamlining. Not even a Bureau of Internal Economic Warfare could make it work well again — if it ever did, which is doubtful. One major flaw, from our point of view, is that the conflict itself, apart from its outcomes in broken lives, has been too much one of wits, too mental, and the requirements of brute force and raw physical shock have not been met by many legitimate enterprises. To put it baldy, not enough actual throats ever did literally get cut.

This brings us to that large and enticing arena on the shady side of the law, which realism requires us to consider: the illegitimate. A career in crime is bound to attract many as their best recourse under postwar conditions. Nor can one condemn it out of hand as absolutely and uniquely antisocial. Indeed, it is rarely embraced by the characters most dangerous to mankind — its false leaders and advisers. Then too, the underworld does perform valuable services for the overworld. It throws its virtues into sharper relief, takes care of many of its failures and mistakes, keeps it proud and alert, and trains men for those posts requiring ruthlessness and cunning. Its character-building potential must also be considerable in view of the stress laid by its ruling gentry on such homely virtues as loyalty, obedience, courage, cooperation, initiative, and self-control. A powerful challenge thus confronts us to build a system which will present an even more compelling appeal.

A warning is in order here against extreme proposals likely to be advanced, such as legalized banditry. It could, of course, be modernized and refined. Conducted on a high professional plane and in the grand or oriental manner which usually includes kidnapping, it would meet many of the requirements. The prospect of being seized dramatically and held captive in a picturesque stronghold, pending even more dramatic rescue by state

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forces or some approved private agency, is naturally attractive enough to blind many to the inherent defects of the scheme. But only a trifling portion of the populace could benefit directly, and they but briefly. Supervision would be most difficult. Moreover, genuine outlaws, scorning official licensing, would surely arise to take selfish advantage of the situation and would quickly bring the plan into disrepute.

War, after all, is the one danger-system which has catered successfully to all of man's strengths and frailties. It alone has appeared able to fire his spirit to incandescence, exalting it to an orgastic peak of exhilaration through a magical blending of the primary excitants: dread, hope, pain, shock, exultation, and the supreme joy of release through desperate, selfless action. But modern war has two fatal defects. It is unreasonably destructive, and it is at any given moment either too boring or too terrifying to fulfill properly its vital psychic function.

Why not, then, reconstruct it from the ground up, so as to eliminate these defects? Why not, indeed, perform a master stroke by *blending* it with peace in such a way as to preserve only the best features of each, thus satisfying all of human nature? Here is such a plan. It makes international, all-out war unnecessary and superfluous by removing its basic, psychic cause. In its place it provides for severely regulated and localized states of nonpolitical belligerency.

Human nature craves human antagonists. Persons willing to serve professionally in that capacity can easily be recruited by psychiatrists from the ranks of the maladjusted, cantankerous, rebellious, and the plain ornery — or even the criminally inclined. The experience of being designated officially as Public Adversaries and given formal status with grave responsibilities, along with opportunity for relatively free expression of aggressive impulses, eventually will purge them of their individualistic excesses.

Though some established communities may be expected to pioneer in the adoption of the scheme, it may be necessary to commence with the founding of new ones able to attract the right sort of people as permanent residents. These would serve as

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demonstration centers for the nation and the world. The types of attack, whether in the form of airplane, tank, infantry, or guerrilla assaults, might be limited in variety and specified in advance for any given locality. The most effective defense measures could then be provided for in the original construction, as was reputedly done in the building of Stalingrad. When every man's home has again become quite literally his castle and fortress, the rebirth of family life will be assured. The extent of the surprise, noise, damage, and bloodshed can be held to a practical and an emotional peak of effectiveness through careful, scientific management. Numerous field referees would keep in constant touch with both headquarters. The use of leftover war materials would solve the problem of cost.

Whatever the tactics employed, and in spite of the very best intentions all around, damage, personal injuries, and fatalities will result. Though they will be vastly less than in the traditional war system which the plan displaces, an ill-informed outcry against them is bound to arise in certain quarters. In reality, safety to life, health, and (with government insurance) to property, is likely to be greater under this plan than in ordinary peace times. England almost achieved this happy condition in its earlier blitz and blackout. For the consequences of abiding under the tonic influence of the primary excitants will be here, as it was there, high morale and purposeful, invigorated living. Those chief causes of sickness and accident: carelessness, indifference, and devil-may-care recklessness, will disappear. Humanity will rise to its full, heroic stature.

But of course misty generalities like these convince no one. A realistic demonstration is required. The following will therefore present, in the form of a supposed newspaper account, the story of a typical day's activities in one of the model cities:

PUBLIC ADVERSARIES REOPEN ATTACKS

"After a three-day lull, a thrilling series of attacks was unleashed Monday by Public Adversaries Encampment No. 2. Both seasoned veterans and a newly arrived group of reformatory

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graduates took part. Shortly after noon, fulfilling an earlier threat, four dive bombers raided the north end of town and in spite of strong defensive fire neatly disposed of a cluster of billboards and two shanties near the dump. The Auto Club promptly remitted the promised reward for distribution among the crews. One plane was hit by the Fred Miller boys and forced down in their father's pasture. Mr. Miller is said to be delighted to get the free week's labor of the occupants awarded him by regulations.

"The long expected attack on the diving float at Lakeside began soon after with machine gunning by two fighter bombers. Answering fire arose from a number of launches, reducing the accuracy of their aim, so that at the end of the allotted time little damage had been done. Then the bombing phase opened. A loud cheer rang out when the Yacht Club raft was seen approaching with a barrage balloon. It was transferred to the float with cool determination, while near misses by the small regulation bombs drenched the men and finally capsized the raft. Upon the securing of the balloon the referee signalled that the assault had ended in victory for the Yacht Club. At the last moment one of the planes was caught by a lucky burst from the gun on the Honeymoon Heights Apartments. The pilot was picked up from the lake, wounded. This feat put the "Honeys" ahead of their perennial rivals, the "Old Crows," whose last score was made Friday in the sensational stopping of the tank attack on the jail.

"Medium bombers began circling promptly at four over the golf course for the surprise attack of the day, a raid on police headquarters. They met unexpected resistance from guns posted on some of the new homes in the Riviera subdivision. It was the turn of those whose names begin with letters between L and R to shoot. After one plane had had to withdraw, damaged, the remaining three took to higher altitudes. From there they scored two direct hits, a very creditable performance, but only minor injury was inflicted because of the special construction of the building. The many near and some far misses caused much excitement in the neighborhood, however, and harm to some properties. The sun parlor of the W. Winchell home was partly destroyed by a direct hit. Also the R. Hope tool shed was hit by many bomb

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splinters, much to the owner's delight. The shed is an old Anderson shelter brought from England, and as expected shows only dents and scratches. Gardens and lawns in the vicinity got the usual churning, but the Little Spartans descended on them with habitual zeal soon after the "all clear" sounded.

"The passengers in one Spartan City armored sight-seeing bus got more thrills than they had bargained for. A bomb landed close enough to them on MacArthur Boulevard to cause several blast injuries, and the bus, out of control, toppled into the crater. The occupants scattered to first aid stations and to the stone sniper seats along the boulevard intended for guerrilla defense. Here a noisy but strictly amateurish barrage was thrown up by a fearsome array of small arms. It was at this very spot that the experimental slot-machine anti-aircraft guns were removed from the curb only last week by order of the City Defense Council. The Encampment authorities had protested bitterly against these weapons because too many of the boys were sneaking over and spending all their money on them.

"The next episode took place at dusk over Shelter Field. A capacity crowd had already occupied the three deluxe shelters when our reporter arrived, and soon the slit trenches and dugouts were filled. Though nearly two weeks had passed without important casualties, everyone seemed as stirred as ever by the whistling of the bombs and the thunderous concussions. These effects were somewhat dimmed at times, however, by the loud singing and revelry. A group of Marine Corps veterans found this behavior slightly irksome, preferring to take theirs "straight" as they expressed it. They were advised to try the slit trenches the next time. These, by the way, furnished the only serious casualties of the evening: two shoe salesmen from Toledo. They will be hospitalized for several weeks. (A reminder: bunk reservations are now being taken for the last two Monday midnight shelter raids this month.)

"After the usual half-hour interval following this part of the program, rockets gave notice of the coming ack-ack show. It was a brilliant spectacle, by common consent, but the pilots of the 4th PA bomber squadron who were on the receiving end were

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reported to have declared it not too bad for the health. One of them hinted that it was the knowledge of the YMCA boys' turn to man the guns that night which eased their minds. This can be dismissed as sheer slander, however, for their score is well above average, as the table of standings clearly shows.

"When the score stood at one searchlight shot out against no bombers downed, four night fighters were allowed to take off. The pilots were veterans heading the long waiting list. The "Addies" [Adversaries] quickly made off, indicating inexperienced crews. Partial consolation was afforded the fighter group later when referees awarded them ten points after discovering fresh machine-gun damage to two of the big planes."

An editorial from the same issue rounds out the picture:

WARFARE WORKS FOR CIVIC GOOD

"Enough time has now elapsed to permit a broad appraisal of our epoch-making venture. The city has found living under fire an exalting experience. Her citizens have united in a brotherhood of arms. Major crime has disappeared. It is no longer smart to be selfish, mean, or aloof. Those who used to relieve their boredom by speeding, petty indulgences, flouting doctors' orders, and taking all manner of chances, now find worthier outlets for their energies. Damage, though extensive, has been repaired swiftly under the goad of civic pride. Casualties have been small since the first disastrous week before we learned caution, and in these cases modern medical science has worked wonders. We can be proud, too, of our service to veterans. Many have expressed their gratitude for being eased back gradually into the ways of peace. Only one gripe is commonly heard nowadays — that regulations are too conservative. And they are. Public opinion would possibly support heavier or longer attacks; it is solidly in favor of more frequent attacks.

"In commending our course to the many tourists and observers among us, we should always point out the overwhelming boon that its widespread adoption will confer upon mankind. This is the opportunity to make and sell vast quantities of replacements

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for goods damaged or destroyed. What could be a better guarantee of permanent prosperity, and thus of permanent international peace? All peoples can now realize that economists' dream, that veritable panacea, an ever-expanding national economic frontier. And they can set it up, not in remote wilds or resentful foreign lands but right in their own homes and shops, in the form of shell holes and bomb craters. So let us all tirelessly proclaim that this plan is good for us, is good for business, and will therefore be good for YOU!"

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The American Scholar Forum

OBSCURITY IN MODERN LITERATURE

Exiles: Rimbaud to Joyce

W. Y. Tindall

Of the difficult writers in our time some are exiles from society, others followers of these exiles. The French symbolists have been perhaps the most influential of the exiles and the most obscure. It is among the followers of the symbolists in England and America that one finds in its perfection the obscurity nowadays so characteristic of polite letters. Some of these followers themselves are exiled, others fashionable, some both.

To be exiled or even unsociably fashionable requires a society. The society which expelled these literary exiles and gave them their manners is of course that of the middle class, which from early in the nineteenth century has been increasingly hostile or indifferent to poets. Accustomed to expressing feelings and ideas shared with their literate audience, poets slowly realized their disinclination or inability to express feelings so much coarser than their own. About the middle of the century Baudelaire looked out of his window and was filled with the "immense nausea of billboards." The rest followed from this.

Baudelaire was an exile; his poetry, in a sense, was private. But he never had recourse to that obscurity which later on became the response of those in his position. The French classical tradition of clarity and craftsmanship remained too strong for him to break; and he translated his hallucinations into the clear, impeccable, and final terms of his tradition. Whatever his implications, he drew his images from familiar reality and maintained coherence on the manifest level. Here he might outrage the reader without confusion. "I have cultivated my hysteria," he remarked; but he cultivated it in the manner of a formal gardener.

Before glancing at his informal successors it might be well to consider the case of another early exile who went further toward predestined obscurity. Gerard Manley Hopkins, spiritual exile from the materialists and heretics of his time, was a literary exile from them and from the Jesuits to whom he had fled. The knowledge that he had no audience and could have no audience but Robert Bridges exempted him from the obligation to temper his honesty. "I do not write for the public," he said; but he confessed himself somewhat dismayed to find that Bridges had found him unintelligible. He need not have been dismayed; for it was his aim to express, not to communicate: "If it is possible to express a subtle and recondite thought on a subtle and recondite subject in a subtle and recondite way and with great felicity and perfection, in the end, something must be sacrified, with so trying a task, in the process, and this may be the being at once, nay perhaps even the being without explanation at all, intelligible."

They disorder these things better in France. Exile, which permitted Hopkins to cultivate his honesty, drove the followers of Baudelaire to extremes of privacy which

An associate professor, W. Y. TINDALL teaches contemporary English literature at Columbia University. Professor Tindall is the author of *D. H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow.*

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make Hopkins seem almost social. Since Hopkins remained unpublished, it was permitted the French to teach future exiles a becoming obscurity.

Rimbaud was a better teacher than Scotus. This genius of fifteen emerged from a middle-class home, looked at the world, and found it "full of grocers." Following Baudelaire, he proceeded first to shock and confound them by his conduct and by his outrageous poetry; and then, leaving grocers to their grocery, he tried to penetrate the unknown. The defeat of this endeavor caused him to abandon poetry and to become, like his grocer, a man of substance. That gun-running in Abyssinia which has been considered his exile from society was not an exile, but rather, like the top hat he purchased in London, a symbolic, bitter, and self-mortifying acceptance of things as they are. The exile of Rimbaud was his life in France while still a poet. "One is an exile," he exclaimed, "in one's own country."

Exile brought privacy and obscurity with it. He did not write for grocers but for himself. He made no attempt to make his poems comprehensible or, indeed, to publish them. Aided by the theories of Swedenborg, Eliphas Levi, the kabalistical *magus* who helped so many poets of the time to escape their time, and by Baudelaire in his capacity of "*voyant*," Rimbaud turned what Verlaine called the "face of an exiled angel" inside out and embarked upon an exploration of his unconscious. Logic and the categories of reason were at once discarded. He suppressed the interference of his conscious mind by drugs, fatigue, and depravity; and, by what he called the systematic derangement of the senses, he penetrated beyond them to the domain of dream, hallucination, childhood, and madness, where no grocer could follow him. At the end of one of the visions recorded or suggested in *Illuminations*, he said: "I alone have the key to this strange procession." In this great, strange, and very private book he used words to express vision, to compel new vision by means of magical incantation, and, using words as a means of discovery rather than of expression, to compel them to do what they cannot do. In a moment of triumph he said: "I noted the inexpressible." Had Dr. Johnson been around, that sociable man might have observed of Rimbaud as he once observed of some obscure eighteenth-century predecessor, "Sir, if Mr. ——— has experienced the unutterable, Mr. ——— should not attempt to utter it."

Observing the manners of the exiles, Jean Moréas in 1886 decided to assert their patterns as principles — to make obscurity, if not an end, an estimable means, and to declare the poet's independence of the common reader. Once established, the pattern would serve as a guide for younger exiles; and even for those who were as yet indifferent to exile, it would be a badge of unfashionable fashion. In his manifesto of 1886 Moréas called the new school "symbolist" — a name justified less by its appropriateness than by the confusion it would excite among the bourgeoisie. Symbolist became a term that covered not only indirection by means of image, rhythm, sound, and verbal arrangement, but almost anything an exile might do, whether symbolic, subjective, mysterious, or merely bizarre. Moréas made it clear that the symbolist poem, avoiding description, statement, logic, and references to matters external to itself, was a complex structure of overtones, indirections, and private images — with a diction, syntax and rhythm peculiar to itself. On the whole, however, the manifesto of Moréas is almost as obscure as the obscurity it recommended.

The labyrinth of obscurity had been established, and poets great and small, exiled and fashionable, honest and knavish, followed its convolutions as the only normal course for men so abnormal as poets are. Valéry's elegant poems are as remote from the common understanding as those of Mallarmé, his master. Apollinaire outdid his predecessors in the grotesque and the strange. Breton, Éluard, and the other surrealists followed Rimbaud and Lautréamont into the unconscious by means of "psychic automatism." By the time of the surrealists Rimbaud was not the only guide to the country he first explored; for by this time Freud and Jung had come to his assistance. Reason and common sense had ceased to impress or to please. The increasing disorder

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of society had turned the eyes of artists within and above themselves. The new physics, displacing old dogmas of matter and continuity, now permitted truths of equal validity to exist on several levels, and, seeming to affirm the unimportance of cause and effect, reinvited the metaphysical and the irrational. Surrealism is a response to this invitation. Although in painting surrealism has its public moments, the surrealism of the poets, whether exiled or not, is an exiled poetry.

The symbolist tradition from Baudelaire to surrealism produced much of the greatest poetry of our time. It is a pity that this poetry should remain unintelligible to the society which unintentionally produced it. The decay of logical structure, its replacement by free association and the unconscious, the conception by poets of the poem as a self-contained organism with internal but without clear external references, the emphasis upon expression rather than communication — all these, while improving poetry, have placed it beyond the common understanding. The separation of poet from audience which gave poetry its present character must be deplored even by its readers as socially unhealthy. But the blame for this separation falls more perhaps upon society than upon the poet; for society exiled the poet before he exiled himself. And popular education, confirming his exile, continues to prepare the reader for Tennyson.

In England and America the French symbolist tradition did not produce significant obscurities until around 1910. For the men of the nineties the strangeness of Baudelaire was enough. They knew of Mallarmé, Rimbaud, and Laforgue, but their obscurity was too advanced to suit the purposes of more backward exiles. With the appearance of Mr. Eliot, however, French obscurity found British tongue.

Mr. Eliot was an exile in a society composed of Sweeney, Bleistein, Krumpacker, Klipstein, and of Burbank and Prufrock at its best. "I have never," Mr. Eliot once said in an address to Americans, "I have never met Sweeney on a footing of social equality." Men of such sensibility are among our principal exports.

As he got the word "sensibility" from the French critics, so from Laforgue Mr. Eliot got the idea of incoherence, of free association, and of poetry as a drama of suggestions, images, and overtones. "Prufrock," "Gerontion," and *The Waste Land* are semi-private streams of consciousness as well as backward glances at a world well lost; and their obscurity is increased by a pedantic, un-Laforguian allusiveness. Mr. Eliot's less extensive debts to Baudelaire, Corbière, Apollinaire, and Mallarmé place him in their great tradition. *Ash Wednesday* is in part a surrealist hallucination. The *Four Quartets* are an incantation and a triumph of rhythm and allusion so difficult that one of the Sweeneys has been driven to devote his time to their explication. Though Mr. Eliot's difficulty comes largely from his careful suppression of intellect, for a long time it was customary to call him an intellectual poet. His pedantry, his attractive confusion of logical Donne with illogical Laforgue, his incantation with fragments of thought, and his ceaseless praise of the marriage of feeling and intellect obscured the fact that, like Laforgue and Rimbaud, Mr. Eliot is a man of feeling.

He has used his rational prose to explain the irrationality of his verse. His essays, better as manifesto than criticism, compose the best rationalization of obscurity. The seasoned reader, he says, does not bother to understand poetry. He just enjoys it. He himself, confesses Mr. Eliot, enjoyed the French symbolists long before he could understand them. They had omitted transitions, statements, logical framework, and other things of low intensity. They were complex; for the complexity of our civilization, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce complexity. Moreover, poetry is as unintellectual as a secretion. The meaning or prose sense of a poem is superfluous, and, if there at all, is there to keep the mind of the reader diverted while the poem does its work. The work of the poem is not communication. Standing alone between poet and reader, the poem corresponds to the feeling of the poet and may excite a feeling in the reader, but the poet may feel pink, the reader blue. These essays are of social significance; for

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through them Mr. Eliot has tempered the loneliness of recent poets.

It is difficult at this time to see whether the obscurity of Dylan Thomas, George Barker, David Gascoyne, and other young poets of the surrealist tendency is due to exile or to fashion or to both. But thanks to Mr. Eliot they enjoy a considerable audience. They are read by other poets and by the readers of Mr. Eliot.

Joyce's exile was darker than Mr. Eliot's and more genuine perhaps. In *The Day of the Rabblement* (1901) Joyce declared: "No man . . . can be a lover of the true or the good unless he abhors the multitude; and the artist, though he may employ the crowd, is very careful to isolate himself." Employing the crowd, Joyce maintained this isolation, increased it by physical exile, and created the characters of his works to illustrate the exile of their creator. Stephen Dedalus, whose name implies the artist martyred by society, deliberately severed his connections with mother, church, and country. "I will not serve that in which I no longer believe," he said, "whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use, silence, exile, and cunning." Mr. Bloom and H. C. Earwicker are outlanders and symbolic exiles. And by its title and implications the play *Exiles* reveals Joyce's preoccupation with his state. Although he felt that art can exist today only in isolation from society, Joyce suffered from a sense of guilt over his own exile. Stephen's hunt for a father, his brooding over his mother, and his almost unwholesome concern with country and church show Joyce's longing, never to be gratified, to recover what he had renounced.

The early works are simple enough. But as his exile deepened Joyce became more and more deeply involved with himself. His mind, lost in the labyrinth of its own being, turned in upon itself, and to express what it found there, turned naturally to the French tradition as the only suitable one. *Ulysses* owes its interior monologues to Édouard Dujardin; its verbal distortion, its juxtapositions of the incompatible, and its grammatical improvisations to the tradition of Mallarmé; its use of hallucination and dream to the tradition of Rimbaud. On the whole it fits the prescription for the novel given in the symbolist manifesto of 1886. Here Moréas longs for a novel in which "a unique hero moves in places deformed by his hallucinations and his temperament. Mechanical beings move around the unique person, serving as pretexts for his sensations and conjectures. Mythical phantoms are evoked. Disdainful of the puerile method of naturalism, the symbolist novel bases itself on subjective deformation."

Ulysses does not quite fulfill this hope, for it has a generous admixture of naturalism in it; and it is to this admixture that it owes its comparative lucidity among difficult works. *Finnegans Wake*, however, fits the symbolist and surrealist ideal. With his often impenetrable allusions, his outrageous double-talk, his rhythms, his tortured and sometimes melted language, Joyce made his texture so dense that frequently he alone could understand what he cunningly concealed. In his use of dream he brought Freud and Jung to the enrichment of Rimbaud. And Joyce surpassed Rimbaud and the surrealists in creating a self-contained private universe into which he might retire to deepen his exile and his sense of guilt.

Exile and guilt are among the recurring themes of *Finnegans Wake*. Both are expressed in fragmentary and distorted allusions to the phrase "*Securus iudicat orbis terrarum*" from St. Augustine. Through the kindness of James Gilvarry, perhaps the greatest authority on *Finnegans Wake*, I am able to supply the passage from Augustine to which Joyce alludes: "The calm judgment of the world is that those men cannot be good who in any part of the world cut themselves off from the rest of the world."

Since Joyce never expected to find the "ideal reader with an ideal insomnia" who could read his book, it is not clear why he bothered to publish it unless even the exiled ego requires this social support. But the few imperfect readers he has secured are as grateful to him for this inconsistency as the commoner reader is indifferent. True to the policy of silence, exile, and cunning, Joyce

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issued no explanations. But his fellow exiles in Paris, Stuart Gilbert, Eugene Jolas, and Elliot Paul, published a manifesto which, since it seems not to refer to their own work, may refer to his. This manifesto appeared in *Transition* (June, 1929). Proclaiming the end of grammar and communication, the autonomy of the imagination in search of a fabulous world, the litany and hallucination of the word, and the triumph of Rimbaud, they stated what the tradition of exile has always implied: "The plain reader be damned."

Difficulty As Style

F. W. Dupee

Although T. S. Eliot's early poems are now fairly intelligible to me, I still remember the trouble they gave me when I first saw them, in the twenties. Even then I felt in Eliot a remarkable pathos and distinction. But the poems as a whole were all the more bewildering because certain of their details and episodes seemed perfectly transparent. There were clear fragments of story, characters with lifelike names, recognizable references to history and literature. But these particulars existed in such strange combinations as to make me suspect even my moments of apparent illumination.

Then I began to study the critics who were explaining Eliot to the general reader, and I discovered that it was a mistake to read him for logical argument or continuous story. What appeared perversely arbitrary in his poems was in fact arbitrary on principle; they had the allusive structure of a dream. And thus in time I began to experience the poems in such a way that it might be said I "understood" them. Yet this understanding helped me in only a general way to follow Eliot's later work or the work of other "difficult" poets. From poem to poem and poet to poet there was always for me a margin of obscurity which had to be overcome by study before my enjoyment was at all complete.

F. W. DUPEE is assistant professor of English at Bard College, and the editor of *The Question of Henry James*, which will be published some time this year by Henry Holt and Company.

Besides, the generation of Eliot was followed by the generation of Auden, and that in turn by the generation of Dylan Thomas; and although beliefs and methods altered considerably from one generation to the next, the factor of difficulty remained fairly constant.

Now much of the writing about modern poety has of course been polemical and has centered around just this question of its obscurity. As a result, its obscurity has come to be regarded as an accidental feature, which could be overcome if the poet were more cooperative or the reader less lazy. A critic like Max Eastman blames the willful snobbishness of poets who could be more lucid if they wished. A critic like Allen Tate replies that the poetry only appears difficult, and that because we have "lost the art of reading" or because we try to read all poetry in the light of habits and expectations formed by a taste for Keats and Shelley. Mr. Tate even maintains that, "the complainant does not understand Donne or Marvell any better than he understands Eliot." But it is hard to say whether this latter statement is true or not: so much hinges on the word "understand," to which critics like Mr. Tate, influenced by the intricate nature of modern poetry itself, have given a new and complex meaning. And they have so impressed us with this meaning that even a writer like Sidney Hook, who is not a literary critic, can say, "The effort to discover what the poet is trying to say contributes to the process of understanding the created whole."

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But there is another possible approach to the question of poetic difficulty. Instead of trying to explain it in terms of the failings of individual poets or of individual readers, we may conceive it as a regular feature of the modern poetic *style*. Many imponderables enter into the formation of any such style, but surely a style is in part determined by the kind of relations which exist between the art and the civilization, between the artists and the society. From this point of view the lazy reader and the aloof poet must both be taken into account because both are elements in the cultural situation out of which springs the difficult style of poetry.

I am all the more inclined to regard obscurity as a special trait of modern verse because, to my knowledge, it has never been much of a problem to past critics. They have complained of it but seldom, and then as merely an occasional and superficial blemish. Horace said in the *Ars Poetica*, "Brevis esse labore: obscurus fio" — I labor to be brief and grow obscure — implying that obscurity is simply a deplorable by-product of the compressive process of metrical composition. Even John Donne seems to have shared, at least in theory, this purely rhetorical view of the problem. He remarks in one of his sermons: "It is true, thou mayst find some dark places in the Scriptures; and *Est silentii species obscuritas*. To speake darkly and obscurely is a kinde of silence, I were as good not be spoken to, as not be made to understand that which is spoken."

Thus for Donne obscurity is "a kinde of silence," or as we would say today, "a failure of communication." In nineteenth-century criticism of Shakespeare, however, critics begin to see in the tangled passages of the later plays a witty and allusive virtue. But it remained for T. S. Eliot, in his influential early essay on "The Metaphysical Poets," to characterize obscurity as a positive, one might almost say, a principled, element of modern verse. "We can only say that it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into its meaning."

Since Mr. Eliot's essay is not intended as a formal defense of poetic difficulty, his remark ought not to be taken as a formal argument. Even as a partial explanation, however, it appears to me of limited value. If cultural complexity in a merely quantitative sense were all that was in question here, then it would be possible to argue — indeed it has often been argued — that other ages had witnessed a comparable complexity without exhibiting any such drastic complication of poetic style as we have at present.

Or did Mr. Eliot mean his remark on the complexity of our civilization as more than a description of this civilization — as in fact a *judgment* on it? Strictures on this civilization are extremely common and extremely vehement in Eliot, and also in the work of other poets of the difficult school as far back as Rimbaud, who was one of its founders. May not the difficult style, then, be regarded as a kind of implied judgment on modern life, the complexity of which is only one of the terrors which it holds for artists? May not this style, with its ambiguity, its allusiveness, its structure of myths derived from private experience or from relatively new and inaccessible sciences, be another symptom of that alienated consciousness which manifests itself in so many ways in modern literature?

I wonder, indeed, if a high degree of difficulty is not an aspect of the modern poetic style, just as a peculiarly brilliant and aggressive clarity was a stylistic feature of the school of Pope. We know that by and large the school of Pope was sympathetic towards the society of its age and regarded itself as the champion of the accepted values against dunces and outlaws; whereas contemporary poets are the heirs of a century-old tension between artists and society. Of course I do not mean that modern poets deliberately obscure their meaning in order to be rude to a world which they cannot abide. It is not a question of individual poets and their motives, but of a general style, of which no single poet was the inventor and in which those who participate do so without neces-

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sarily having full awareness of its cultural implications. Indeed, so prevalent is the style today that poets with only a lesser grievance against the modern world — poets like E. E. Cummings and Wallace Stevens — are only a little less difficult than Eliot or Rimbaud. And finally, the difficult style is not confined to poetry but is present in painting, in certain works of prose fiction, and in other contemporary arts.

What I have been saying is not intended as a "theory" of difficulty in poetry; and considered as a contribution to the polemics over this issue it certainly begs the question. The opponents of modern poetry will say that if difficulty is inherent in the style, then it is the style that must be assailed or defended. This I happen to think is true. Not the obscurity of the poetry but the poetry itself ought to be the issue, if we assume that by study and experience modern poems can, with whatever tax on our patience, be made to yield up reasonably satisfactory meanings. In short there is no very sensible *a priori* defense of this factor of difficulty; it is defensible only in so far as it is an element in a poetry which can on other counts be shown to be great poetry. For poetry has often had to make its way against common sense: the early reviews of Keats are very persuasive so long as we don't read Keats. And similarly the obscurity of modern poetry may often seem to be unreasonable, antisocial, even insane; but out of that poetry have come Rimbaud's *Illuminations*, Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Yeats's Byzantium poems — works which are not, in my opinion, unreasonable or antisocial or insane, but which are great examples of literature.

This Alexandrian Criticism

Sgt. William Van O'Connor

The anarchism in poetry especially, in literature generally, that began as far back as the 1890's, was a revolution against the comfortable and the complacent. It marked the beginning of a world that still has not received its definition. A *new* way of seeing was demanded of each art form. In *Poetry's Dark Night* Jacques Maritain has evaluated the first of these efforts — by Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Verlaine and their associates — to make poetry an instrument of knowledge, an instrument of passionate perception. The postwar poets, rather than retrenching and returning to an art of circumspection, swept on into new orgies. Anything experimental served to destroy a stuffy tradition, and was therefore welcome. One contemporary who lived with these movements, participated in many of them, has written:

> The comprehensible element in everything was proscribed, melody in music, resemblance in portraits, intelligibility in language, every sort of liberty was taken with grammar, sentence structure was wrecked, prose read like a telegram with peppery interjections; besides which such literature as was not activistic, that is, saturated with political theorizing, went on the dust heap.

A whole literature of poems, from the symbolists on down, has been written in the effort to understand and to explain the poetic medium. If criticism has become Alexandrian, so, in a sense, has poetry itself. Only now has an unself-conscious, formal poetic style begun to appear. A spiritual revolution, in the making for far more than a quarter of a century, appears ready to define itself. Once defined, the need for the intense effort to *understand* will no longer exist. A people secure in their vision of the world have no need for such criticism.

WILLIAM VAN O'CONNOR is the author of *Climates of Tragedy* and several articles on contemporary poetry and criticism. A sergeant in the Information and Education section of the United States Army, he is now editing a weekly newspaper and helping to organize forum discussions at a base in the Southwest Pacific Area.

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A world in dissolution has a desperate need for it. Those most sensitive to the Alexandrian climate in which they live will write an Alexandrian criticism, which may explain why we have a generation of poet-critics.

Professor John Crowe Ransom in his *The New Criticism* has noted that literary criticism today is probably on a higher level than it has been in the history of English literature. On the other hand criticism (of the kind Ransom is concerned with) has never had a more limited audience. T. S. Eliot, of course, has a following and has influenced directions in poetry. But he does not have the audience in breadth enjoyed by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critics. The gentleman journals and magazines of those centuries have no parallel in our time. Popular critics do have a following, an appreciative but non-critical audience. Their influence upon literary directions is negligible. Van Wyck Brooks's studies are read not so much for their intrinsic value as criticism as for their anecdotal and biographical value. At their own level they have the appeal of Gamaliel Bradford's *Vignettes*. The standing and influence of a Samuel Johnson, an Alexander Pope or a Samuel Taylor Coleridge is denied to most of our able critics. Their "specialty" currently is out of favor.

Contemporary critics have been ridiculed for their Alexandrian intensity — their concern with criticism being, it would seem, of more moment than their concern with creative writing. The virtues or excesses of individual critics aside, contemporary society *demands* such a concern. Never before perhaps in western history have *avant garde* movements multiplied and subdivided with the speed of cell life. All the forces at work in the post-renaissance world that have brought society to economic, political, psychological and spiritual crises are violently or subtly evidenced in cross-grained patterns in these movements. An understanding of them necessitates not merely aesthetic knowledge and sensibility in relation to all but universally accepted beliefs (which was the relatively circumscribed problem of the critic contemporaries of Johnson or Hazlitt) but a knowledge of intellectual history *and* the establishment of a personally evolved and consistent set of values — because we no longer have universally acceptable beliefs. The intensity and meticulous care with which many of these critics work is necessitated by the ever-changing and ever-enlarging concerns (with their antecedents) that affect the artist in our society. If the establishment of aesthetic values and their philosophical implications were the sole function of the critic today his scrupulous efforts might be dismissed as latter-day scholastic wanderings among fine-spun but largely irrelevant rationalizations. The modern world has lost its sense of the *whole* man. Before the critic can narrow his attentions to the felicities of image, bons mots and poetic structures, he must achieve at least a tentative understanding not only of the forces that have disrupted or given a new character to literary forms and substances, but that have disrupted modern man and his society. His criticism will always be in terms of the line, image, poem, play or novel, but his analyses will relate directly or by extension to the condition of modern man.

The problems of this criticism go off in innumerable directions: the depersonalization of modern man; the loss of faith and the consequent forms of naturalism; the influence of scientific techniques upon imagination and the use of language; the absence of universally acceptable beliefs; the sentimentality (in its multiple forms) that attends upon the society without myth, vision, or faith; the developments dependent upon the discovery of the subconscious; the influence of ideological, economic, and political theory upon literary forms and substance; the movements and idioms that have arisen ineluctably from these multifold pressures. Critics have not tortured their traditionally gentlemanly pursuit into a perverse and over-ingenious specialty. Complexities have been forced upon them.

This contemporary criticism of poetry is in a traditional form. The poem is criticised as a thing in itself. This would seem to be the only reasonable approach: to get inside the poem, to see how the parts relate to the whole and the whole relates to the parts. Thereafter the critic moves outward — toward the culture of which the poem par-

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takes. The poem remains his point of focus. To the poem he brings all the relevant considerations at his command. (This beginning at the *beginning* in criticism has had to await the failure of academic approaches which masqueraded as criticism, or, more often, ignored criticism for the archaeological forms of scholarship.)

One able poet-critic, Theodore Spencer, has parodied the extremes sometimes indulged in by his fellow critics, yet he has the judgment not to condemn their method. It is now almost a commonplace of criticism that the critic should explain, not the conscious aims of the poet, but his unconscious purposes — which is another way of stating the critic's concern with cultural problems as they relate to the poet or to poetry. The danger point is where the critic begins to create his own unconscious as that of the poet, or to read a narrow and circumscribed view of cultural history into the poem. There likewise is a danger for the poet-critic. The critical process is antecedent and complementary to the creative process, not identical with it. A too subtle, too sophisticated critical-minded poetic consciousness will preclude directness, immediacy, flow and passion in poetry. At this point criticism turns inward upon itself, partakes of the same narcissistic life that debilitates much artistic work in our time.

Spencer sees two further dangers: the invention by these critics of a series of terms peculiar to their own criticism and the further tendency to remove the poem from "normal experience" by seeing too much subtlety in it. The nature of our society and literature demands an intensely specialized knowledge. The attack on specialization in criticism is neither more nor less justified than attacks on the other specialties. A world with more homogeneous beliefs and a more simplified pattern of living may slough off many of the incidentals and irrelevancies common to all the specialties. At that point the creative arts doubtless will have discovered a new simplicity and wholeness. The dissipation of modern arts into innumerable directions will have subsided and the need for intensive work over a broad area of critical concerns will be of less moment. The development of each specialty has given rise to a specialized vocabulary. Many of these certainly are composed partly of a jargon that lends an air of affected profundity to characteristic statements. The literary critics are in a position to be more aware of the dangers of jargon and to guard against it. So long as the critics maintain a primary interest in explaining artistic work rather than in exhibiting their critical faculties, the danger inherent in vocabulary would seem a minor one.

The weekly supplement and monthly magazine book reviewers for the most part do not carry on the tradition of criticism. Dwight McDonald, developing a theory of popular culture, finds that criticism, like the arts it purports to explain and evaluate, has been subjected to the levelling force of larger and larger uncritical audiences. The genuine critics have retreated to books that sell in limited editions and to writing for the little magazines. The professional reviewer serves to acquaint readers with current outputs — little more. Commonly one learns almost weekly of the year's most important novel, of sonnets second to none in the English language, or of historical studies that clarify the destiny that shapes our ends. There is nothing of the specialist about these reviewers. Yet if one reads Johnson on the poets; if, too, one reads through the essays Joel Spingarn edited from our history of critical writing, one discovers that Philip Wheelwright, Allen Tate, Arthur Mizener, Kenneth Burke and the others (they who go largely unread) are in the tradition. Their criticism has become more intense in accordance with a need for a more intensified knowledge of literature.

It is enlightening to contrast Van Wyck Brooks's pages on Emily Dickinson (*New England: Indian Summer*) with those of Tate or Blackmur. She emerges from Brooks's few exquisitely arranged anecdotes and phosphorescent phrases (the fewer the facts the easier the myth) as an elfin barriesque creature. The dominant image, a domestic and whimsical adolescent (the poet never matures in these pages), stands between us and the creature whose poetry we have come to know.

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She had a little watering pot, with a long slender spout that was like the antenna of an insect, and she sat up all night at times to keep her flowers from freezing. . . . She called herself the "cow lily," because of the orange lights in her hair and eyes.

This butterfly creature domiciled in a conservatory with her sister Lavinia and her flowers, making homely and witty remarks to children, is not the poet. There is a mind and a sensibility to be examined, not merely a flitting fortyish creature to "catch" for the moment as she touched a hand in the parlor and disappeared toward her attic room. Given the contemporary indifference to criticism, such a portrait may add readers for Brooks (or win him a Pulitzer prize); it hardly adds to his stature as a critic.

Frequently of course one sees references to Mr. Blackmur's fabulous layers of subtlety. His is a keen mind, and so after a time one may come to think of him in terms of a mind focussing upon facet after facet with relentless cunning, as though he were capable of studying the onion not only layer by layer but groove by groove and by patterns of interstices and intersections. Yet when one turns to his essays again they seem remarkably clear, coming from so remarkably subtle a gentleman.

Blackmur gives us a *milieu*, incomplete though it must by necessity be, which enables us to understand not only a part of the poet's mind but the mind of New England in her time.

> Renunciation
> Is a piercing virtue,
> The letting go
> A presence for an expectation —
> Not now.

It [the poem] rises . . . out of a whole way of life — the protestant, puritan way, felt suddenly at what can be called nothing less than a supremely sophisticated level. . . . Some function of the word *pierce* precipitates a living intrinsic relation between *renunciation* and *virtue*. . . . It is — if we may provisionally risk saying so — the physical elements in the word *pierce* and the participial phrase *letting go* that, by acting upon them, make the other words available to feeling, and it is the word *renunciation* that, so enlightened, focuses the feeling as actuality. . . .

An exposition of the verse idiom of the mid-nineteenth century follows. Miss Dickinson's poem is discovered in terms of philosophical and religious feelings, currents, the idiom of poetry at the moment, and her ability to fuse imaginatively into poetry the elements in a hortatory tract. The pivotal paragraph is this:

Emily Dickinson came, he [Allen Tate] says, exactly at the dying crisis of Puritan New England culture — not at the moment of death, but at the moment — it was years long — when the matrix began to be felt as broken. Spiritual meaning and psychic stability were no longer the unconscious look and deep gesture worn and rehearsed life-long; they required the agony of doubt and the trial of deliberate expression in specifically, willfully objective form. Faith was sophisticated, freed, and terrified — but still lived; imagination had suddenly to do all the work of embodying faith formerly done by habit, and to embody it with the old machinery so far as it could be used. . . . Thus the burden of poetry was put upon the New England version of the Christian sensibility.

Both Elie Faure and Nicholas Berdyaev (and not they alone) have expressed an interpretation of the artistic sensibility in the post-renaissance world somewhat similar to Tate and Blackmur's interpretation of Dickinson's New England. If Berdyaev cannot be characterized as a "popular" figure, at least Faure, to a certain extent, can be — his five volumes of art history are seen in cheap reprints in libraries and homes over the country. It seems likely that were the above quoted paragraph and an equally sound and facile exposition derived not in a context of critical theory but of political theory, and the author were, say, Max Lerner, no one would profess the result esoteric or beyond common comprehension. That the specialists who contribute to the scholarly journals for literary study — they who have read and written house-deep tons of finely spun theory on the Arthurian legends, the authorship of unread plays, the parallels to and sources of thousands of artistically unimportant verses, *fabliaux*, *novelle* and plays — find this critical movement over-specialized — is one of the ironies attendant upon the complexity of the contemporary world. No small portion of this irony inheres in the failure to recognize that one purpose of this critical movement is to organize scholarship in terms of meanings and values.

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Frequently the name of common sense is invoked against this criticism. One of the dangerous contemporary fallacies, the glorification of common sense as exhibited by the common man, likewise is dear to the academic world. Hardly surprising, it is yet a little disconcerting to find so able a scholar-critic as Joseph Wood Krutch presenting the common sense criticism of the eighteenth century, particularly that of Johnson, as the desirable alternative to the specialized criticism of our day. The fallacy in this single, even simple-minded faith, in a secular virtue may be exposed easily enough.

The conjunction of "common sense" and "sound criticism" is not so natural a union as it may at first seem. Common sense, of course, like an adequate sense of irony, saves the reader from being taken in by exaggeration or excess. But common sense serves merely as a rule of thumb; it has no all-embracing validity in the evaluation of the arts. Certainly the limitations of it in the "age of common sense" should give us pause. Literary history of this period is filled with examples of preconceived critical dicta being used to force imaginative expressions into stiff and inappropriate patterns. The restrictions put upon the imagination of Shakespeare in the name of good judgment and common sense should make us wary of common sense criticism. A less well-known illustration is the suppression of David Smart's "Song of David" from the posthumous publication of his poems. The poem was believed evidence of a deranged mind. Yet the evaluation now put upon the imagination of Smart in relation to his contemporaries is such that only Blake is seen as having conceived more brilliant fusions. Imagination functions indifferently — subject though it may be, at certain levels, to common sense. The inferences and evaluations of common sense arise from an acquaintance with and acceptance of patterns. Imagination uses patterns merely incidentally in transmuting gross particulars or patterns into new substances or unique patterns. Common sense, serviceable as a check, if allowed a dominant control precludes a high order of imagination. When, as in our time, a "new set of requirements" demands imaginative insight, the too close adherence to the dictates of the homely virtue becomes an inappropriate rationalization. Common sense is the virtue of a stable world; it inhibits, to a degree, the understanding of a pattern in the making. Common sense, derived from a knowledge of one pattern, must itself be transformed *after* the creation of a new pattern.

Johnson, despite his frequently arbitrary evaluations in the name of common sense, did write analytically (even imaginatively) of lines, images, technique in relation to insight — in terms of the poem itself. A number of his insights into the metaphysical poets have been borrowed and developed by critics now writing. Among the orthodox academic studies one finds little that might be in extension, or an adaptation, of Coleridge's criticism. Indeed the subject of imagination (which fascinated Coleridge) in relation to poetry seemingly has been skirted as a dangerously "subjective" field of study. Professor Lowes's *The Road to Xanadu*, exemplifying the orthodox scholarship at its best, presents the substances and patterns over which Coleridge's imagination played. There is little indication that Professor Lowes had any genuinely critical interest in Coleridge's gifts, and in his usage of them as poet or critic. Indeed one turns to another study in which Professor Lowes discusses the patterns of English poetry to discover a startling indifference to, or ineptness in, relating poetry to intellectual history. The techniques of the critical process are ignored for the standard clichés and illustrations of the literary historians. One has to turn to the professional critics or poets, to I. A. Richards, Kenneth Burke or to Wallace Stevens, for an extension in treatment of the problems Coleridge was concerned with. The "specialty" of criticism has withdrawn from the popular journals to the quarterlies and little magazines, where it is largely ignored by the older members of the academic world. Meanwhile the scholarly world exhibits yet another example of a widely current anachronism in its continued effort to apply the ideals of archaeological scholarship to a problem that demands "an entirely different set of requirements."

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Poetry and the Common Store

Marc Friedlaender

Responsible recent criticism has been of two minds about obscurity in the arts of our time, or, in the more restricted form of the problem, in our literature. Those friendly critics who would reassure us about our poets by demonstration that the creators in each generation have been obscure to their contemporaries, loose their historical thunder at our heads with the olympian assurance that in due time we shall see that what seemed obscure was but an unwillingness on our part to comprehend forms other than the traditional ones, and that sympathy and an expenditure of effort will suffice to remove us from the circle of the unseeing. Those who are willing to abide the bolts, and who are not fearful of being confounded with those who do not see for want of eyes, pronounce our poets difficult, our literature obscure from causes that are varied but that are generally chargeable to the poets and correctible by them.

M. Henri Peyre's developed statement, in *Writers and Their Critics*, of the first of these positions will survive the most careful scrutiny. There are weaknesses in the historical argument, however, even in M. Peyre's hands. That the greatest poets have not been judged by their contemporaries and countrymen as having the stature that we assign them is not to say that great poets have been neglected or scorned in their own time. That second- or third-rate writers have often been preferred or regarded as rivals to *our great*, or that the *wrong* works of the *great* were preferred to those we know as their masterpieces, are matters not demonstrably related to an inability to comprehend the meaning of the great work. It is, of course, true that obscurity in poetry is not peculiar to the last century and a half. There are some kinds of obscurity, however, that the passing of time darkens rather than illumines, obscurities that demand footnoting now more than when they were written: the obscurities in the allegory of Dante or of Spenser, the obscurity that comes from the encyclopedism of Burton or Milton, the obscurity of the ephemeral, and the obscurity of the satirist. Moreover, the obscurity associated with the visionary and the mystic has been a constant in poetry.

Nevertheless, in the literature or in the other arts in Europe there is no evidence from a period more remote than the last hundred and fifty years that would justify a theory that creative works have always seemed obscure or difficult at the time they were created. Nor does it appear that *obscurity* was, before that time, a consequential problem in criticism.

Undoubtedly it has happened that at various times a writer has been found obscure or difficult, his representative quality not even suspected, by a generation or a nation which had not the perception to know itself or to discover the one who has known it. Also, from many ancient instances has come the notion that the significant artist has been the innovator and that as innovator he has not immediately been understood. However, only at certain moments in history has the artist felt himself a blazer of trails: when he has been made self-conscious about his art, aware of the problem of communication.

In his essay on Goethe, Thomas Mann has made it abundantly clear that the great creators have not scorned the necessity of maintaining their powers by a continuing study of the master spirits and by devoting themselves to learning, adapting and imitating. Such an artist, fully aware of the dangers, yet does not fear the loss of his individuality. His relationship to society and the problem of communication he has solved with the same confidence. In the most significant moments, through the exercise of self-discipline and self-control, the artist, in satisfying his own needs and without conscious intent to speak to the general body,

MARC FRIEDLAENDER is an associate professor of English at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina. Professor Friedlaender is the author of several articles on the English Renaissance.

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has spoken, nevertheless, for the general, has become representative. Used in this sense, *self-discipline* and *self-control* are merely the consciousness of those group pressures that the artist has been willing to accept as binding. He was a person then of *superior*, but not of *special*, gifts.

Because in himself the artist was both man of letters and citizen, an harmonious relationship existed between the one and the many. In such a situation there was no problem of communication or of obscurity.

When this concord was broken, the fundamental struggle between the artist and the world, a struggle which had been held in nice balance and which had been made beneficent by mutual forbearance, broke out anew. Poets of one sort revealed their insecurity in mutterings or scoldings that were expressed in inversionary or didactic works, poets of another sort conceded all to society, pandered to the world. A situation is created in which the artist is forced to choose whether he will compromise his identity in order to achieve communication or sacrifice his representative character in order to express himself. This choice has not been a choice that the artist has always or even generally had to make. It is necessitated only when the artist has ceased to feel that he is within himself creator and audience, that the audience beyond is but an extension into the general of the self or the particular.

The kind of obscurity with which we are here concerned appears then at a time when or in a place where the artist is not able to identify himself with his audience either because the artist has left or been ejected from the group or because the culture group has disintegrated (1) by a physical or mechanical extension of the group to include elements not yet assimilated, if assimilable, or (2) by the loss of the common body of reference, of the myths that constitute the tradition of the group. In Europe and America, the last century has been such a time. Undoubtedly, universal education and the revolutionary developments in the mechanical methods of communication without any accompanying extension of the spheres in which experiences are shared have pyramided the difficulties of the artist in organizing his experiences in such a way that his perceptions and the formal expression he gives them will meet the demands of his own integrity and, at the same time, satisfy or be understood by any large segment of his audience. It is true too that men of letters, irritated and angered by the lumpish mass grown large, have fled; and that the hungry sheep, mistrustful of those they cannot understand and of themselves in the presence of poetry, have turned wolfish. Surely, ivory-towerism, expatriation, and exile have been debilitating but characteristic features in the literary scene during this period. Moreover, there is another kind of flight from the group that has been notable in our literature: the turning inward that has stemmed from the psychological preoccupations of our time and, more specifically, from the exploration of the realm of the subconscious. Nevertheless, in its most fundamental form, the problem of obscurity in our modern literature seems to have arisen from the loss of a set of stories, myths, and images that the educated in the Western world, or in one of its parts, have held in common — the loss of a frame of traditional values in which the artist and his audience move easily and with confidence. Henry Adams told us long ago that our difficulty stemmed from the disintegration of our iconological knowledge; and, by implication, the recent studies of Cassirer and Panofsky and others in the Christian-humanistic iconology of the Renaissance and its disintegration indicate the same thing.

The prerogative of the artist to express his perceptions through images, stories, and myths, the knowledge of the symbolism of which he can feel sure educated men of his time share with him, has been characteristic of the *civilizations* of the West no less than of the Chinese. This condition can only prevail in a society in which at least a part of the educative process has been given to the acquisition of knowledge about and

a familiarity with specific *themes* or *concepts* as transmitted through literary sources, whether acquired by purposeful reading or by oral tradition. [An] Australian bushman would be unable to recognize the subject of a Last Supper; to him, it would only convey the idea of an excited dinner party. To understand the iconographical meaning of the picture he would have to familiarize himself with the content of the Gospels. When it comes to

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representations of *themes* other than biblical stories or scenes from history and mythology which happen to be known . . . , all of us are Australian bushmen. In such cases we, too, must try to familiarize ourselves with what the authors of those representations had read or otherwise knew.*

Since the eighteenth century, artists have not been able to employ a set of images which any *educated* man would be able to identify, much less understand in its nuances and implications. This has happened because with the disappearance of the subject core of the liberal arts curriculum there are no literary sources with which all *educated* men may with reason be presumed to be familiar. In fact, we may no longer be sure that an "educated man" has knowledge of any literary sources. The artist can now be surer of evoking the image of the beauty of the female form in "educated" groups by allusion to Dietrich or Lamarr or Burma than by allusion to Etain or even Helen. One has only to read Mann's account, in his essay on Freud, of the implications, the symbolism of the Joseph story to see how unprepared we are to comprehend the *meaning* of one of the few stories from a literary source that remains generally familiar. And Mr. I. A. Richards and others have demonstrated how unprepared to respond to the simplest iconography even the "best" universities of our time leave their graduates, who are surely a part of the class from which the audience for poetry would be recruited.

The disintegration of the group culture that followed upon the Renaissance and the Reformation and that expressed itself in the disparateness of curricula, left the artist, shorn now of the power to impose "self-restraint" and "self-discipline," with a fairly private set of myths which tended to become more and more esoteric, to show the marks of pedantry. Mr. Tate's exposition in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* of the iconography of his "Ode to the Confederate Dead" will serve as an example as well as any other. Then there is *Ulysses* with its exegetical commentaries.

On the other side, the artist, stripped of the images through which he could express *meaning*, turned to non-literary and non-conventional themes: to the representation of external nature, to still-life and genre subjects, and finally to a concern only for form and forms. Only when madonnas have lost their iconographic meaning, do apples have as much *meaning* as madonnas.

The distillation of meaning out of literature has brought us to the obscurity that comes from the use of words as pure sound, to a poetry which, we are told, we should not try to understand, only appreciate, to an abstractionism that holds the *Divina Commedia* more beautiful if one does not understand Italian. The theory of the unimportance of the subject or theme has led to a "flight from the literary" not only in dance, in painting, in music, but in literature as well. There has come an impatience with the problem of meaning itself and, of course, with its communication.

Then obscurity and difficulty *are* characteristic of our literature, but the ultimate responsibility for this obscurity, or for the dissipation of it, does not rest with the men of letters. As a matter of fact, the most perceptive poets, though obscure, have stayed close to the central tradition. This is indicated, I take it, by a phenomenon many teachers have observed — their most sensitive student poets, after they have had a grounding in the traditional, write "like Eliot," or Yeats or Lewis or Spender, before the students have had any acquaintance with them or their disciples.

The elimination of obscurity in our literature waits upon the reconstitution of the audience of which the poet may feel a part, upon the creation of a common store of reference, familiarity with which would be shared by all who might properly be called *educated*. Though the group would be reconstituted by the submission of all candidates to discipline in the same body of stories, images, myths, and their symbolism, the literature comprised in the common store should constitute a *new* iconology, not one derived from literary traditions that had *meaning* for a society whose qualities are not ours. It is in this respect that the St. Johns's books will probably not serve as the books of the common

* Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 11–12.

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store for any curriculum that can attain wide acceptance in America in our time. When we have begun to create the frame of a realizable common store, when the American college has been brought to reinstate in the curriculum a required subject-core, then we shall have grounds for hope that our artists will find their way home, forgiving all.

In the Autumn Issue . . .

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM will present a discussion of "The Future of 'T.V.A.'s.'" James Dombrowski, Walter Rautenstrauch, and others will contribute.

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UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

Neo-Sacred Music

I have just received an announcement of a program of American Sacred Music of the Twentieth Century, and I have been wondering why I could not somehow refrain from smiling a little, with both condescension and surprise. Why shouldn't there be sacred music in the twentieth century? Why should one so immediately jump to the conclusion that it is likely not to be very sincere or to be very impressive? One would greet in the same way the announcement, I suppose, of a new Gothic cathedral, or a Greek temple of 1945, or Homeric Hymns of the Present Hour. There is no reason why sacred music should not be attempted now, or why it should not flow from the deepest religious feelings, or be — in the musical idiom of our own day — quite profound and moving music. Only the suspicion remains that it is not likely to be any of these things. Sacred music? One thinks of Palestrina and of Bach. One fears that the contemporary composer will either repeat the old patterns without conviction or genius or self-consciously avoid them. There is the suspicion that the music will be a little bit like the Bible in modern American English, or that it will sound like a contemporary novelist trying to have his characters speak in the language of the King James version.

Sacred music has always in the past grown out of a great communal sense of religion. The composer was a close part of the tradition within which he wrote. I suspect from looking at the programs and recognizing the names that there is a sincere but willful attempt on the part of modern skeptical minds to take a deep breath and express a tradition no longer closely or intimately felt. The sacred becomes a theme for grandeur, an occasion, rare enough in the modern world for eloquence. It will, I suspect, be neo-sacred music.

And I received in the same mail an announcement of the St. Matthew Passion of Bach. I hate to be stuffy about the new, but life is short and Bach is beautiful, and I may perhaps be excused for feeling that there will be nothing on the program of Twentieth-Century Sacred Music in America that will have anything approaching in either sheer beauty or sheer poignance the closing pages of the St. Matthew Passion. But it would be wonderful to have some composer speak with ardor and artistry about the certain emotions of mankind that are not specifically twentieth-century. Adoration, jubilation, hope, and grief about the central concerns of life are scarcely dead. They are historically old, but each time they are felt they are new. But sacred music? The music like the term will be purely conventional, especially if the note be forced.

Sermons Out of Church

A group of us interested or engaged in education were discussing how very secular the public imagination has become. "People don't go to church, but they still like to be preached at," said one educator. He pointed to the homiletic tone of some of the most popular radio commentators, the note of edification in the widely read columns of Walter Lippmann, the vast highly organized women's club lectures, the popularity even during rationed wartime of the rather solemn after-dinner speaker. There is a legend that people fall asleep during the sermons. If they do, it is a fact that they seem to like the accompaniment to falling asleep. But the fact

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is that lecture audiences are curiously, these days I think, almost tensely attentive if they have any feeling at all that the speaker may have anything like a "message." What are they waiting for in the sermon in print or on the secular platform? Perhaps for precisely what they no longer get because they stay away from religious services or what they miss when they get there: the note of revelation, the accent of ecstasy, the guiding principle, the significant keystone to their lives. Precisely because there is no believable authority, no single authoritative command, they are looking for prophecies. Voices are sought that will make everything meaningful and make everything clear. We are deluged with facts, but it is principles people are looking for. The facts are chaotic and plethoric and violent; it is ideas, even ideals that are sought. And what is required is the note of conviction and contagion, of counsel that will turn anarchy into some meaning. They like to be scolded, as the popularity of Philip Wylie's *Generation of Vipers* proves. And what was Mr. Willkie's book but a secular sermon that tried to fire the imagination of millions of readers. He was advising us to be "members one of another," as St. Paul did two thousand years ago. He was giving the moral equivalent of the fact of communication and transportation that have made our world one. It will, he said, be one in disaster unless it becomes one morally. That is what Mr. Willkie's book was about.

He was, in a very old religious tradition, really reminding us that the bell is tolling for us all. And so, almost every week now, are we told by the wise anonymous writer of the first page of *The New Yorker*. The best sermons are not necessarily given in churches. Can that be the reason why so many people stay away?

Brazil Unvisited

In the interest of inter-cultural relations, a hideous phrase for a sound enough idea, I am, before these lines appear, going to be in Brazil. I shall be trying to express certain American philosophical ideas — in English, I regret to say — to our Portuguese-speaking neighbors. But it is not about my official duties that I am to write here. The preparations for going, the inoculations, the learning of a new language (one confusingly like Italian and Spanish), the excitement of going abroad for the first time, in almost eight years, the sense of going to another continent (I have never been in South America) — all this has prompted the mood that comes to the expectant traveler.

Oddly enough, I have a curious regret bred out of previous travel experience. I know I shall never again be able to retain the image of Brazil unvisited. I have every reason to expect I shall be enchanted. Travel films have made Rio familiar, Brazilian songs and singers and musicians are well-known here. I have known two or three wonderfully informed and cultivated Brazilian writers and philosophers. But Brazil, like any other place unvisited, is a residual image compounded of elements furnished by the images of childhood overhearings and random readings. Brazil is coffee plantations; it is jungles; it is land without any race problems because intermarriage among whites, Negroes and Indians is so complete. It is the rhumba and the carioca. It is the beautiful harbor of Rio. It is the tropical jungles of the interior. It is the country in which Stefan Zweig lived in his last years; I once heard him say that it was the most civilized place that he, widely traveled as he was, had ever been in.

Some of these suggestions will be confirmed. But every time one visits another society or civilization one acquires new images, while old cherished, uninformed ones disappear. The soldiers in the Persian Gulf Command found out in that parched land why gardens filled with cool waters are so much cherished in its traditional art. Greece was for me always a temple shining on a hill. The Parthenon was there when I got there. But even in happier days, the visitor saw a rather scrubby, second-rate looking modern European town. In my own experience only England, at least in the country and in parts of London, looked like what it should have looked like, and felt like what it should have felt like. But then since nursery days England was part of one's familiar imaginative world.

I don't pretend, like Wordsworth, to prefer Brazil unvisited to Brazil visited. But as

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knowledge grows, illusions vanish. Or do they? Is it not a sometimes almost fatal human stubbornness to go through life keeping the images with which one begins and refusing to give up the illusions even for the sometimes more interesting truth? There are many philosophers who have begun with an image of the universe, which no amount of experience will force them to correct. The map of the world one has imagined has a strong hold over the mind even when the true map assumes very different proportions.

I was going to promise my readers some impressions of Brazil. But I have traveled before, and I suspect if I am honest in writing in these pages about what is really playing in my imagination at the time, while I am in Brazil, it may not be Brazil I am thinking about, but Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue or the odd limbo of atmosphere of American college education in wartime, or some things in American life that will come up in odd and fresh proportions because I shall be six thousand miles away and living among people to whom the commonplaces of life in the United States are not even well-known enough to be rare.

Worlds Elsewhere

Years ago, sojourning in England, I used to be impressed by the attractive combination of provincialism and cosmopolitanism woven into the very substance of English life. In the smallest village somebody had relatives in Canada, or Burma, or India, or Africa. Walking quietly by a Sussex hedgerow would be a man who had spent half his life in the Argentine or in the Andes or in British Columbia. At least for the duration of the war, there can be no American village that has not learned to accept as part of the natural order of events letters from the South Pacific, North Africa, India, China, the Aleutians, Iceland. There is no part of the world that is unfamiliar with the stride, accent and temperament of Americans. The stereotyped American tourist has been forgotten doubtless in the past few years. The rich, paunchy and self-indulgent tourist on world cruises has been replaced by a type of American the rest of the world scarcely knew.

There was a period, beginning about twenty years ago, when the young began to be known in Europe, a type of youth now almost an idyllic memory, whose hearts were young and gay and for whom Europe was (how incredible it has come to seem!) an escape. They came over by the hundreds in those halcyon summers before 1929, most of them quite unaware of the Europe which was heading toward today's holocaust. The more serious ones were bemused by the past, the museums and the churches, the more trivial by the entertaining surface, the cafés and the music festivals, of contemporary Europe. It seemed for a while as if American colleges simply transferred to Europe for the summers. Well, it is an understatement to say that young Americans are again in Europe. They are there now not in thousands but in millions. Many of them in ordinary times would perhaps never have seen Europe, many of them would never have seen the inside of a college. Those who come back will, though without the elaborateness of Henry James's heroes, be aware of worlds elsewhere, and be given pause when thinking about America or Europe and the relations between them. One wonders whether, for that matter, the Orient can ever be quite so remote to a generation which has been there in its youth, or even to an older generation which has been accustomed to seeing letters from the East come daily by air mail to Pella, Iowa or Arlington, Vermont.

Talk of the Devil

I notice that the Devil is getting his due again, or perhaps more than his due. Denis de Rougemont has just published a small book called *The Devil's Snare*, in which he blames on the devil most of the separate and several ills that have been charged by more secular-minded thinkers to vitamin deficiencies, economic maladjustment, international insecurity. M. Rougemont says that the Devil's subtlest wile is to persuade us into denying his existence.

I notice in the usually secular-minded *Nation* that, of all people, the movie critic complains that "evil" has become unfashionable, that nobody believes in it any more. It is notorious that Reinhold Niebuhr thinks the world cannot move toward good until we

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recognize Evil in general in the world and in ourselves. The Devil is not always talked about directly; he is sometimes dialectically masked as a *principle* of evil, but the Devil is beginning to lurk in every discussion and if one does not look out, he will catch the hindmost secular mind.

In a world so full of specific evils and overwhelming miseries and disorders, it is a great temptation to have a devil to blame, and I am not surprised that many modern minds are re-discovering him, or wishing they could.

Meanwhile, a great many contemporary thinkers are finding in the Heavenly City, blueprints of perfection. Perhaps the sacred music I mentioned at the beginning of these meditations is more appropriate to this era than I had at first supposed.

"Under Whatever Sky" is a regular department of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, conducted in each issue by Irwin Edman.

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The Revolving Bookstand

An Assortment of Horizons

Harlow Shapley

If futility is what ails you, it is high time that you stop off at home one or two evenings a week and give some attention to writings by wise and inquisitive men, such as those whose volumes I am about to mention. And if you are planning to take part, vicariously or actively, in world construction and reconstruction, then you can usefully examine these same books. They are chosen from among the wartime products of scientists and other writers who are reporting back from the front lines of scientific exploration. They have therapeutic value and can, if sympathetically absorbed, counteract intellectual doldrums and recession.

A variety of frontiers are opening up, calling to the curious and the ambitious. There is the little-explored realm of electrons in the domain of atomic entities, that will continue to bore most deeply into our daily living, and do it without such over-salesmanship as the vitamin industry develops in order to keep our minds body-conscious and our fingers on our pulses. There are still some bits of old-fashioned geographical frontier, both along the Amazon and up beyond the Alcan Highway, that can absorb pioneering sections of our dispersing humanity. And there are horizons of health and human personality; also trails leading into the mysteries of the beginning and end of human life, and cosmic frontiers which strange radiations cross, hotly pursued by peculiar telescopes.

Our science writers and professional explorers produce readable untechnical stories as a part of their business. But also the scientists themselves in recent years have become increasingly sensitive to the social responsibility of interpreting some of the hardest thoughts of technical research and development. As an avocation, they produce volumes that frequently compete on even terms with detective fiction for the attention of the bedtime reader, and easily win the competition for those who are seriously curious. Most of the volumes mentioned in the following survey of frontiers are written by experts who have contributed competently to knowledge and now endeavor to contribute constructively to education and social service.

We shall start with the sub-microscopically minute cosmos of the electron and finish with ultra-macroscopically immense galaxies. In between are many terrestrial affairs to be considered, for the cosmos of man is also full of mysteries and uncrossed boundaries, notwithstanding humanity's age-long obsession with itself.

We start at the core of material things, and remark that when John Mills writes about electrons [1] and such minutiae of the atomic world, the reader can unwrinkle his brow and worry no more about the authority of his author, or the technicalities of his technician. For Mills is expert both in the electronic field and in telling you of it. His small volume, which primarily presents the mighty electron tube in its many phases and adaptations to everyday life, and touches also the secrets of the electron microscope and television, with even a bit on broadcasting and on atom-busters, is full of glimpses of the electronic frontiers. Some are to be explored by the atom-breaking cyclotron and its relatives and descendants, some by the special hush-hush gadgetry that war science has developed. You will be hearing more of microwaves in the not-distant future — those radiations whose wave lengths are measured in

HARLOW SHAPLEY, director of the Harvard College Observatory, has been a member of the Editorial Board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR since 1941.

[1] Mills, John, *Electronics Today and Tomorrow*, D. Van Nostrand Co., N. Y., 1944.

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inches or less. It is in this realm of the "ultra highs" that Mills believes our present frontier lies. And he observes, "Someday another term will be needed to describe the superduper highs which the wartime surge of scientific advance may produce. But for the moment . . . shrouded in military secrecy." When the wars cease, public electronic sensitivity will open up, and here is a fairly simple volume to get you ready for it.

The radio waves, which are captured out of the ether with the generous but frankly complicated assistance of electrons in the tubes and wiring of your radio, are a billion times longer than the light waves you are using in reading this page. A million times shorter than light waves are the "waves" of cosmic rays — those house-and-man piercing radiations that have carried much of the energy of the universe ever since man first blinked wonderingly at the stars a million years ago. The existence of cosmic rays has been known for less than two generations. And puzzled men are still blinking wonderingly at the penetrating phenomenon. Pierre Auger produces a most competent book[2] in order to ask the simple question: "What are Cosmic Rays?" He tells all that is known about them, does it entertainingly, and conceals the mathematics and experimental machinery with success. But he leaves for future seekers at the horizons of the world the solving of the persistent mystery of the origin of cosmic radiation. These highly penetrating rays pass through the walls of your house as light passes through the window panes. They beckon to investigators of many kinds. The biologist is wondering if they produce biological mutations and are factors in the evolution of plant and animal; the chemist wants to know if they are involved in the operations of radioactivity — do they set off the atomic explosions of radium and uraniums; the astronomer asks if they are produced by the explosions of novae and supernovae, or perhaps by the material calamity of long ago which we call creation; and the physicist, their principal caretaker, climbs mountains, dives the sea, crawls into mines, and sends balloons into the stratosphere in search of knowledge of their behaviors and laws. Millions of the atoms in your body, whether you are in the open, or in the safety of your house, or within the thick walls of jail, have been broken to pieces by cosmic

[2] Auger, Pierre, *What Are Cosmic Rays?*, Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1945, $2.00.

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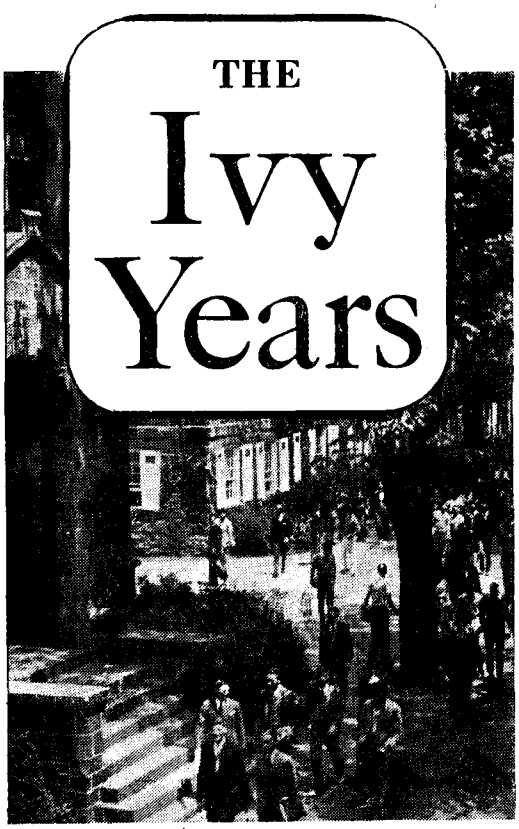

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rays while you have been reading this paragraph. Pierre Auger has himself worked on this short-wave high-energy radiation as a pioneer, in Paris and in the Alps. "Auger showers" is the name of the large blasts of cosmic rays. He knows the known facts, and is willing to speculate pleasantly. Better get this expert's book, written with the clarity typical of a French scientist, and read all about them, while you harmlessly disintegrate under their unceasing bombardment.

More simply comprehensible, perhaps, than the atomic frontiers that must be broached by trained scientists are the few remaining slightly-explored regions on this planet's surface — areas which can still be investigated by any one who will possess himself of a jeep or a helicopter and gasoline, and include three interesting volumes in his travel gear. Dr. Caryl P. Haskins' book on the Amazon [3] presents the life history of a river from the standpoint of history, geography, economics, and sociology. It is appropriately mentioned in this group of scientific volumes on frontiers, not only because its author is a wide-ranging and pioneering scientist, but because the future of mankind on earth of necessity involves the scientific use of such great valleys as the Amazonian water-shed. Here we must turn for food, fuel, and living space. Haskins has produced an informative volume that is basically optimistic. One suspects that the heat and the exciting bugs and diseases may eventually be less of a problem to the nations of the Amazon than the greedy politicos, both the imported variety and those of native culture.

Similarly we shall find temperature, insects, and politicians as obstacles to the attainment of horizons partly opened by the Highway to Alaska.[4] But the temperatures there involved accentuate the negative, except in the brief and sometimes very hot summertime; and the insects are monotonously dipterous (flies and mosquitoes) and may long be a real obstacle to the enjoyment and development of the picturesque nothern land. Mr. Lank and his companion did a good methodical job of jeeping from Times Square in New York City to the Alcan Highway and over it, and many of its tributaries. Scenery, economics, ethnology, folklore — nicely illus-

[3] Haskins, Caryl P., *The Amazon: The Life History of a Mighty River*, Doubleday, Doran and Co., N. Y., 1943, $4.00.

[4] Lanks, Herbert C., *Highway to Alaska*, D. Appleton-Century Co., N. Y., 1944, $5.00.

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trated, chattily written, but occasionally much on the nether side of brilliant. It encourages you to put Alaska on your list of postwar vacation plans.

The third book in the travel kit of those who want to go and see frontiers is a remarkable volume. Perhaps you should leave it at home, and stay there with it for a very careful reading and analysis, especially if your taste for geography is in the sphere of geo-politics. For the volume of essays, selected and edited by Dr. Hans Weigert, a distinguished professor of Political Science and Area Studies, and Vilhjalmur Stefansson, distinguished explorer and student of primitive societies, is rich in the things we ought to know and bother about if we are at all interested in the world with which our grandchildren must contend. It bears the intriguing name *Compass of the World*.[5] Here are the titles of some of the sections: The New World — Geography and Geo-Politics; New Directions and Skyways; Reflections on the Heartland; Reflections on Asia. And here are the names of some of the writers: Isaiah Bowman, Quincey Wright, Eugene Staley, Sir Halford J. Mackinder, Owen Lattimore, Frank W. Notestein. These names and twenty others are assurance that subjects such as population trends, the Arctic in the future, the Heartland (southern central Russia), and the future of the airways, are adequately and compactly analyzed. There are horizons everywhere in this book, with those in the Canadian, Siberian, and other top-of-the-world lands especially emphasized (Stefansson would see to that). The volume is as thought-provoking as that other estimable anthology of social studies by experts, Dr. Ralph Linton's *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*,[6] which is basically anthropology of the cultural sort and therefore not so appropriate for our present consideration of scientific frontiers.

The boundary-seeking of Kirtley Mather's small volume, *Enough and to Spare* [7] lies in the future of nourishment for the body and raw materials for civilization. The book, doubtless, was written backwards, and might well be read in the same fashion. That is, we can start, as the author did, with the knowl-

[5] Weigert, Hans W., and Stefansson, Vilhjalmur, *Compass of the World*, The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1944, $3.50.

[6] Linton, Ralph, ed., *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, Columbia Univ., Press, N. Y., 1945, $4.00.

[7] Mather, Kirtley F., *Enough and to Spare*, Harper and Bros., N. Y., 1944, $2.00.

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edge that is contained in the very constructive appendices. It is good scientific practice to accumulate your observations before you attempt your arguments and conclusions. The statistics of petroleum, coal, crop lands, birth rates, population trends at home and abroad — all these are assembled, along with a bibliography that can guide the reader beyond the statistical data. Armed with the confidence that is given by the presentation of facts, the reader is prepared to follow the argument, agreeing or debating. Malthusian and Darwinian doctrines are exposed as both good in their day and possibly bad in their extrapolations through our time. As a distinguished geologist in Harvard University, the author is on familiar ground when he explores the earth's surface for raw materials. With an eye to the ingenious advances in agriculture and technology, he cannot escape the conclusion that there is enough and to spare for all the human population of the globe. As a humanist he is on familiar ground in taking his discussion of mankind in the coming world into the realms of social, ethical, and political arguments. Is there enough and to spare of freedom and democracy for all the peoples and nations of the planet? That is the question that the international conferences of this year and next have under consideration, whether or not they recognize the problem and the responsibility. Dr. Mather becomes rather pessimistic when he takes the long view. "The sands of time are running swiftly for mankind, and this may well prove to be a case of now or never . . . the race now is a very real one between the use of scientific methods for constructive purposes and their prostitution for destructive ends. If in the next few years mind and spirit fail to make real progress toward the goal of world cooperation, there may be no human bodies left five hundred years from now. Man, too, can become as extinct as dinosaur and titanothere."

The reviewer never did contend that this planet has much to commend it in the long-range evaluation of the cosmic whim.

Electrons and galaxies are objective enough, and quite impersonal, providing we do not think too closely of the atomicity of our bodies or the fate the whirling stars hold over us. In contrast, human embryology is about as intimate and introspective as one could imagine. Instinctively one is a bit squeamish about explorations of the human fetus. But since we are inquiring about goings-on at the frontiers of scientific knowledge, we must not hesitate to give consideration to Dr. George W. Corner's *Ourselves Unborn — An Embryologist's Essay on Man.*[8]

In the production of this volume, which is based upon the twenty-first series of lectures delivered at Yale University on the Terry Foundation, that distinguished lectureship has again served us well. Dr. Corner's three essays on the Embryo as Germ and as Archive, Prenatal Fate and Foreordination, and the Generality and the Particularity of Man, have a charm which the necessary technology does not seriously counteract. When a chapter begins with a "narrative of a personal experience that broke upon my steady toilsome days as a medical student with the suddenness of an apocalyptic vision," one is willing to risk subsequent encounter with some strange polysyllables, and especially is that true when we read further —

> The reason for telling it here is that it will explain the inclusion of a chapter on prenatal mortality, and justify my own persistent interest in the subject ever since the time I helped to fight the Devil for the soul of an infant, beneath the cross of St. Agnes. If it seems incongruous that the tale begins in the very forecourt of Heaven and then descends to bare facts discovered by a mundane and even heretical young scientist, in a hog-butcher's establishment on the West Side of New York, that is merely the way of our science of embryology, which comes so close to the daily life of mankind that it leads its students into unexpected situations.

I wonder if a better treatment of foreordination has ever been composed than is found in this essay. The next chapter begins, "I once had a caller at my laboratory who spent an afternoon trying to demonstrate that the human race is the result of a cross, sometime in the dim past, between an angel and an anthropoid ape." In the subsequent development, it strikes me that the angel's implication in the affair is not well established.

To most readers, Dr. Corner's guidance through those first hidden nine months of human life will be an eye-opener. But if the reader, in his strength of body and beauty of spirit, is now inclined to fancy himself, the illustrations of his early stages will be a bit deflationary.

At the other end of the life span, we come to the frontiers of natural death, which is

[8] Corner, George W., *Ourselves Unborn — An Embryologist's Essay on Man*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1944, $3.00.

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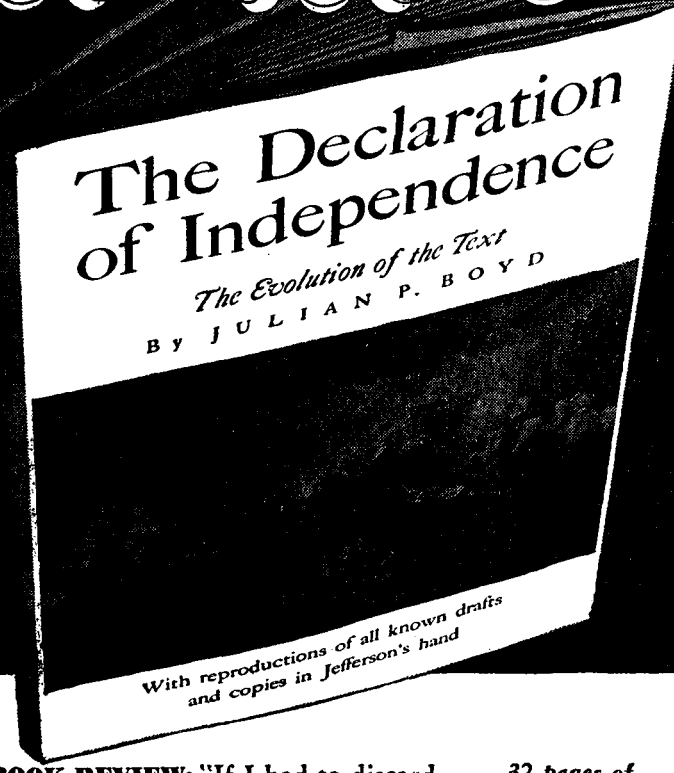

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perhaps the most vigorously investigated boundary under inquiry at the present time. Certainly it is the most pondered-about by the practitioners of that remarkable synthesis of organic chemistry called Life. The cancer problem is a foremost enemy on the battlefront of living organisms. Next to diseases of the circulatory system, it is the most lethal assailant of mankind. Eternal fame awaits those gifted experimenters who finally win the battle. Also unending gratitude is theirs from a stricken humanity, for nearly five hundred Americans perish daily from this scourge, with the frequency increasing because more candidates now live into the cancer-susceptible ages over fifty.

It is now possible for the general reader to get a fairly full description of this horrible enemy, and learn what the front-line fighters think of the foe, and what they are doing about it. In general, the public should, of course, not read the books on cancer; they are too technical if authoritative, and too often dangerously amateurish, or even crackpot. Moreover, they frequently scare one into premature decline and decay. But *The Riddle of Cancer* by Oberling [9] is noteworthy for clarity, style, and authority. A leading European student of cancer writes the volume; a leading American expert, Dr. William H. Woglom, provides the translation. The book obviously is written for more than the untutored public, for it has a well-organized bibliography of eighteen pages, and an ample index.

Dr. Oberling's book is not meant to deal with the treatment of the cancer patient, but on the chance of being useful, I should like to use his words in reiterating some important principles:

> The general practitioner . . . must have constantly in mind the prime necessity of early diagnosis, and realize that his most sacred duty in every doubtful case is to set in motion all diagnostic means at the disposal of modern medicine: biopsy, endoscopic exploration, X-ray examination, and biochemical tests.
>
> As for treatment, . . . modern methods are entirely beyond the scope of the general practitioner, and . . . to employ such outmoded medicaments as arsenic salve, silver nitrate, and other vain measures is no less than criminal.
>
> Against cancer there are only two weapons, surgery and radiotherapy.

[9] Oberling, Charles (trans. by Dr. W. H. Woglom), *The Riddle of Cancer*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1944, $3.00.

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Dr. Oberling's treatise is so pleasantly written (there are no photographs or drawings of cancers!) that one is tempted to quote many passages such as: "Some day, perhaps, it will turn out to be one of the ironies of nature that cancer, responsible for so many deaths, should be so indissolubly connected with life." Or, "We are tempted to draw the astonishing conclusion that cancer is not one single disease, and instead of saying *cancer* we ought to say *cancers*."

The contents of the volume can be quickly summarized. After citing the appalling history and statistics of cancer, the three leading hypotheses (out of scores of silly hunches) that reasonably attempt to account for the cause of cancer, are presented in some detail. They are the Irritation, the Embryonal (from moles, etc.), and the Parasitic or Microbic theories. No one is sufficient to cover all cases, and in fact all of them fail to satisfy the total evidence. Assuring us of that situation, the author devotes about half of the whole volume to the discussion of experimental cancer. Many animals die that eventually men may live. "One year of observation in the mouse is as good as a hundred years in man." Experimentation in man and animal has shown us much about cancers, but has not led to the origin or the cure-all. Dr. Oberling concludes the survey by arguing his two cautiously proposed theses — that cancer, like the common cold, may be a complex of maladies; and that the most likely cause is not microbes in the usual sense, but the viruses, those entities that seem to be between the animate and the inanimate worlds, and in both of them also. The objections to the virus hypothesis are frankly stated and stoutly argued down. But saying the word "virus" and believing "virus" doesn't answer the question of origin fully, and apparently it has not yet led to additional therapeutic measures.

The conclusion of this important and readable book is not too discouraging:

> Arrived now at the end of our journey, we have to confess that the problem of cancer has not been solved, though highly significant facts accumulated during the past years suggest that it is not insoluble. Alone among the various hypotheses that of the viruses seems to have a real chance of leading to the goal.

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explore *Climate and the Energy of Nations*[10] along with a gifted writer and charming thinker who was inspired in 1931 to ponder the rise and fall of civilization by a pessimistic comment from his boss, Ramsay MacDonald, who mourned: "Government has become no more than an ambulance, and its success is measured by the speed with which it deals with disaster."

This young parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister of England naturally proceeded first to Gibbons' *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and Buckle's *History of Civilization in England*, and such classics, including *Mein Kampf*. The result of his inquiries, meditations, and wanderings, including American travels sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation, we have now before us, in a most provocative volume. We have long been familiar with Ellsworth Huntington's insistence upon the importance of climate in the locations, growth, and decay of cultures. Markham's volume covers the familiar arguments and seems to go much farther. Our poor-white problem of the South is naturally associated with climatic infelicity. And there are poor whites in South Africa where they are something considerably lower than the decent black native. Is this the result of climate, and would it be rectified if the world-wide technology of the future left off talking and did something about the climate? The author insists that the facts show "most clearly that the decline of the white is accompanied in *every instance* by a lack of heating arrangements, lack of protection against the sun, and lack of cooling arrangements such as solid buildings."

The ideal indoor climate can be formulated in terms of temperature and relative humidity, with air movement as a third factor; but the ideal outdoor climate adds new factors, such as the direct heat of the sun, and the differences in habits or activities of human beings. It is clear that we have new fields in examining what history has done to men in various climatic environments, in the analysis of the inherent national energies, and in planning large-scale resettlements or mass migrations. Markham's study should be required reading for both the amateur and professional world-planner.

In conclusion, we reach for the sidereal frontiers, and treat them as symbolic of the aspiration of mankind for pure knowledge.

[10] Markham, S. F., *Climate and the Energy of Nations*, Oxford University Press, London, 1944, $3.50.

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To attain galactic objectivity and coldbloodedly to meddle with the extent of space and time, we must resort to the utmost of practicality. Man's mind may inherently have sufficient grasping power, but his sense organs are woefully weak when he turns starward. He must become an engineer and mechanic, in order to reinforce his eyesight and accumulate methodically and grandly the data for cosmic contemplation. In *Telescopes and Accessories*[11] Dimitroff and Baker have provided in simple language and copious illustration an expert's guide to subexperts. They have also provided a guide to the general reader on how light works to bring us knowledge of the outside world; how astronomers and physicists use the spectroscope, thermocouple, electrometers, photo microdensitometers, and the spectro-heliokinematograph, which are just as complicated in structure as in pronunciation, to unravel sidereal secrets. Here is the story and the hope of the famous 200-inch Palomar telescope; the story of the novel Schmidt-type reflector which represents the first advance in reflecting telescopes since the time of Isaac Newton; the description of the coronagraph that provides for the observer in the high Colorado mountains total solar eclipses every day. The book is the most recent of the series of "Harvard Books on Astronomy." If the reviewer were not one of the editors of the series, he would feel justified on the evidence before him in saying that the Dimitroff-Baker volume is as good a popular scientific book as astronomers can produce. The listing of the significant telescopes of the world, and a diagram of the nature of the earth's atmosphere from the surface to the auroral arcs 500 miles up, are each worth half the price of the volume. Did you know that *Acidalium* is a sea on Mars, and that *Hagar Itifer* is a sinus? Well, we too are content not to know everything.

[11] Dimitroff, George Z., and Baker, James G., *Telescopes and Accessories*, The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1945, $2.50.

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OUR READERS COMMENT

Professors in Prophetic Mood

To the Editor: In the Forum on "Group Tensions in Postwar America," which appeared in the Spring 1945 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Professors MacIver, Kandel, Llewellyn and Wirth insist that postwar America will become the scene of acute inter-group tensions and conflicts. They, like the rest of us, live in an anticipatory atmosphere. The daily events of war seem to escape us. By the time a momentous action has been consummated our thoughts have already moved forward to the anticipated event, the unknown contingency. A new time-quality seems to pervade contemporary reflection, and this anticipatory mood may lead to dubious intellectual habits. We may become the victims of *Trend-thinking*, a habit which was once known, I believe, as prophecy.

Prophets and trend-thinkers seem to develop pessimistic attitudes, and this is understandable since those who are moved by the prophetic itch must possess an instinctive knowledge that if the worst happens, they will be complimented for their insight and foresight, whereas, if the better arises, people will be so elated that they will either forget or forgive the prophets of doom. Professors MacIver, Kandel, Llewellyn and Wirth seem to have teetered on the very edge of dark prophecy. They saved themselves but only by a narrow margin. They saved themselves by utilizing a method which intellectuals so often avoid, namely by pointing their ideas towards action.

MacIver and Kandel believe that our coming group tensions may be resolved by means of education conceived in terms of democratic pluralism as goal. Llewellyn, the only candid optimist among the contributors, appears to rest his case finally upon something which sounds like mental hygiene, which, obviously, would also require learning. Wirth seems to believe that the conflict between groups may automatically produce a democratic resultant. These are all pertinent suggestions and deserve critical examination as well as further projection into the realm of action.

MacIver's thesis may be stated in his words: "We must teach the meaning of democracy, getting down to the earth of it. . . . We extol democracy but we do not comprehend it." Professor Kandel asks for forthright indoctrination of democratic precepts; rather, he assumes that we must use democracy as *the* end of education, the source of all value and direction. These are intellectualistic proposals and as such may lead to mischief. It is already evident that some of our theoreticians of democracy have begun to introduce a variety of Platonism into their doctrine. They seem to be doing to democracy what the priests and theologians have already done to the simple morality of Jesus.

Democracy may be taught and talked to death. The only safe procedure is to teach democracy as action, not as pure idea. Loyalty which does not emerge from experience is likely to become either fanaticism or hypocrisy. The very method in education which Professor Kandel condemns, usually called progressive, is the one best suited to his purposes. But, like so many critics of the activity or project approach to education, he repeats the now current condemnations of educational reactionaries. If an apt illustration of teaching by inculcation of ideals and values is sought, why not examine German education under Hitler? It seems also relevant to ask Professor Kandel to scrutinize more carefully his demands for unity of values and common direction in relation to the principle of pluralism which he also espouses. Are we to assume that cultural pluralism is capable of operating in a society committed to a static and unified cluster of values? And, are we to assume that it is safe in a democracy to vest our public schools with the right to teach all pupils "what to think"?

Certainly, the long-range probabilities of sustaining a democratic society must be equated with education, but who is to be educated and how? The long-term program may not be a genuine opportunity unless we do something in the short-term. The persons in America who are now involved in inter-group tensions and conflicts are for the most part adults. Children are, of course, infected by adults but they are now the inventors of those group images which confuse and falsify our human relations about which MacIver speaks so eloquently. Professor Kandel mentions adult education but merely as the final term in a sequence, but is it not obvious that our main weakness lies precisely here? There is no solution for the difficult task of maintaining a democratic society save through *adult* education. Otherwise there will never be a sufficient number of responsible citizens who will know what kind of a world it is in which they live and make decisions. I am not now speaking of adult education for the dis-

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privileged and the neglected. On the contrary, I have definitely in mind that vast body of citizens upon whom the colleges and universities have placed their stamp. When they begin to recognize their responsibility for adult education, both for themselves and their fellows, then we may be able to shatter that absurd convention which regards education for a profession as dignified and acceptable whereas education for human relations is considered to be a luxury. Finally, it is these adults who manage the affairs of our world for whom the dynamic conception of education, learning through doing, is most suitable.

Professor Wirth's suggestion that "the conflicts that beset America will be resolved, if at all, through contest and compromise between mass organizations" needs amendment. A democratic resultant cannot appear if preceding action has followed non-democratic procedures. Our giant pressure groups may insist as loudly as they please that their goals are democratic but if they do not behave democratically in the pursuit of those goals, the results will fall on the anti-democratic balance. Indeed, this entire discussion dealing with the issue of democratic survival might profit from a thoughtful consideration of Ralph Waldo Emerson's famous dictum: "The ends pre-exist in the means."

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN,
Professor of Social Philosophy,
New York School of Social Work.

The Author Replies

To the Editor: I have been very much puzzled by Dr. Niederland's attack on my article "Germany Can Be Re-educated." He charges me with advocating the "rapid rehabilitation" of Germany, while I say expressly that the process of re-education will be a slow and gradual one (pp. 319–320). He reproaches me with using words like "idealism," "*Weltanschauung*," "sense of greatness" in a honorific sense, while the very point of my analysis is to subject these concepts to criticism and to indicate their negative (as well as their positive) implications. Thus I point out that the Germans' capacity for democratic cooperation is sadly underdeveloped (p. 313), their dependence on authoritarian control (p. 318), their tendency "to follow their leaders into the most desperate and self-destructive adventures" (p. 311), their "lack of tolerance" as being rooted in a "perverted morality" (p. 314), the "weakness" or even "absence of constructive ideals" during the era following the first World War (p. 315), the need of punishing those who have "destroyed life at

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home and throughout Europe" (p. 321). Is this the language of an unconscious disciple of Goebbels as runs Dr. Niederland's unfounded and unfair accusation?

On the other hand, Dr. Niederland neglects to explain the existence and nature of the National Socialist propaganda machinery although such explanation is the crucial test of his denial of any essential difference between pre-Hitler and present day Germany. Dr. Goebbels would certainly have been very much surprised to learn from Dr. Niederland that his office was a superfluous one in that the Germans had already been Nazis for more than two thousand years. I had devoted much space to a discussion of the pernicious effects of National Socialist propaganda. Dr. Niederland hardly touches the subject.

Instead, he asserts, with a gust of familiar rhetoric devoid of any true historical understanding, that the Germans, since their entrance into history, have always been aggressors and a treacherous and brutal people. What does this assertion, coupled with the implicit denial of the possibility of re-education, amount to except to a theory of permanently and immutably fixed national and individual characters. Such a theory not only contradicts the basic findings of psychology and pedagogics, but politically involves acceptance of the race theory, that theory which constitutes the very root of Nazi perversion and which, in fact, directly leads to the very extermination policy which Dr. Niederland deplores so much.

The question to anyone who does not accept such a theory is, therefore, not whether men anywhere can be educated, but, since this is taken for granted, what are the possibilities and the best available instrumentalities for individual and social education. My article was an attempt in this direction. But considering the extraordinary complexity of the problems involved, I had stated that it is "imperative to examine and integrate as many different views as possible." Not only has Dr. Niederland failed to make such a contribution, but in view of the fact that his letter is evidence of a very superficial reading of my article and exhibits an almost complete lack of understanding for the kind of analysis I had undertaken, the recklessness of his attack must be regretted.

JOSEPH KATZ,
New York, New York.

From "Somewhere in Belgium"

To the Editor: Just received the Winter number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. It is refreshing to get a breath of this sort of air over here. I hope I shall not miss future issues. When we get into Germany, I wish I could give the Germans a big dose of this kind of medicine as a purgative for their vile Nazi doctrines.

My best wishes to you and the staff.

MAJOR WILLIAM MOSELEY BROWN.

A Broad Point of View

To the Editor: For some years now I have been enjoying the articles in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR — at the house of a friend. Now it is time to take the bit in my own teeth and read your well-seasoned, provocative and timely material at my own leisure.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to add your publication to my already long list of periodicals, but I realize how important a broad point of view is to understand the kind of world in which we are living. If we can develop, through your philosophy, a well-rounded individual with a mind free from all prejudices, then we shall gain that priceless possession which is the very marrow of our democracy — an informed and freedom-loving citizenry.

But in order to realize this goal, we must first attempt to outline an education worthy of our youth, a training that will stress the dignity and personal inviolability of every human being, regardless of race, creed or color. This can be done only if we clarify our goals in this present struggle, only if we assemble all the loose thinking into a fabric with a definite pattern, and each and every one of us must be willing to *live* as well as to think out our own responsibilities.

That is why I like your publication: it presents so many points of view — and all sincere (which is very important) that one is bound to do a little thinking for himself. I have enjoyed your Comment section because real problems are presented by readers who are puzzled at some of the statements of those who know far more than they do. Let us try to answer some of the questions our young High School boys and girls are asking, and let us be honest and truthful about this, because these boys and girls are our future presidents, our future governors, mayors and other public officials, as well as our future scientists and humanists.

I would indeed enjoy your latest issue.

EMANUEL LEVINE,
Department of Science,
Freeport High School, Freeport, Long Island.

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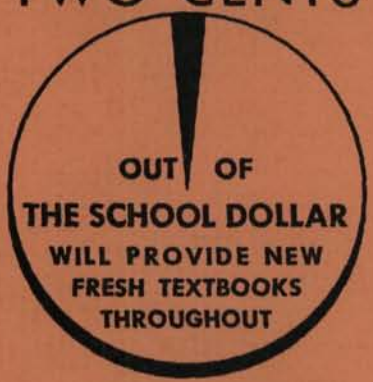

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